



THE INDEPENDENT

No 3182

WEDNESDAY 1 JANUARY 1997

WEATHER: Very cold

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PROSPEROUS
OUR REAL



Sign of the times: Henry Gano, kitchen artist at The Dorchester hotel in London, carves out a New Year greeting in ice, a task which required the assistance of 12 colleagues

Photograph: Glynn Griffiths

Blair freezes out activists

Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent



Labour is preparing to cut trade unionists and other activists out of policy-making by dismantling the constituency parties which are their power-base.

In a fundamental reform which will remove the main building blocks of the party's grass-roots organisation, the party's leadership is planning to sweep away a system which has existed for more than half a century. The scheme could plunge a newly-elected Labour government into a Clause IV-style battle only weeks after it comes to power. However, Tony Blair is believed to be determined to press ahead with plans to push "One Member One Vote" right to the heart of the party.

The scheme is likely to be published in May or June, and left-wingers are already preparing for a fierce struggle over it at this year's conference. They fear it would allow a Labour government to push through policies which they would never have accepted, such as a complete break with the unions.

Under plans to be presented early this year to review groups headed by the party chairman, Tom Sawyer, unions and other affiliated groups, such as the Fabians or the Co-operative movement, would lose their links with Labour's grass roots.

General management committees, which run constituency, select candidates and send motions to conference, would be replaced by a small executive of four or five people elected

through OMOV, he said. This group would draw up shortlists of candidates from an approved Walworth Road list for party members to vote on. Members of unions and other groups would only be able to vote if they were Labour Party members.

The review groups are also likely to recommend sweeping changes to Labour's annual conference and its National Executive Committee, both of which have seen embarrassing show-downs with left-wingers.

Already, a new code of conduct has been imposed on Labour MPs, prohibiting them from bringing the party into disrepute. There have been hints that the new code, passed last month by the Parliamentary Labour Party, could be used to

discipline MPs who consistently criticise the leadership.

Ken Livingstone, Labour MP for Brent East, has warned that the measures could plunge the party into internal strife just as it takes power. "It would be madness. There would be massive opposition from a large number of MPs, activists and trades unionists," he said.

The plans originate from the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, an influential group which claims to have been instrumental in securing "One Member One Vote" (OMOV) and the abolition of Clause IV.

It has already published an interim report, "New Labour: A Stakeholders' Party", which sets out its views. Ben Lucas, the chair of the committee, argued that power in the party should

be given to individual members.

The committee, whose members include Labour's home affairs spokesman, Jack Straw, and the foreign affairs spokesman, Robin Cook, wants policy to made through regional and national forums on specific issues. Each member should vote on it, he said.

The document argues that the National Executive Committee should no longer make policy and that the annual conference should mirror the US party conventions as showcases which do not "leave things to chance". In future, there should be no more "boring but potentially damaging debates about arcane resolutions". Last year's conference was split by a row over pensions involving the former minister, Barbara Castle.

Mr Lucas said the Labour Party had been built "almost on a Soviet model". Activists who wanted to get things done should pursue issues through other groups, he suggested.

"If you are interested in what trades unions are doing then go along to your local trades union. If you are interested in environmental issues, then form a group on the environment."

A Labour spokesman said the party had nothing to say about the review and no conclusions had yet been reached.

QUICKLY

Hebron deal
Israel and the Palestinians finally agreed on an Israeli redeployment in Hebron, the last West Bank town under occupation. Benjamin Netanyahu and Yasir Arafat are expected to initial the deal shortly. Page 7

West film outrage
A deal to make a film of the life of the serial killer Frederick West was greeted with outrage by politicians, religious leaders and his relatives. Page 3

CONTENTS

Arts	8
Business & City	13-14
Comment	10, 11
Crosswords	2, 20
Features	9
Foreign News	7
Gazette	12
Home News	2-6
Leading Article, Letters	10
Obituaries	12
Shares	14
Sport	16-20
TV & Radio	19
Weather	2

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Saudi nurse retracts confession

Steve Bowes
Chief Reporter

One of the two British nurses charged with murdering a fellow nurse in Saudi Arabia has withdrawn the confession that her colleagues claim was made under duress.

Deborah Parry, 41, told the British consul, Tim Lamb, to inform the Saudi that she did not stand by her confession when he visited her in prison on Monday.

So far, Lucille McLauchlan, 31, from Dundee, and Ms Par-

ry, from Hampshire, are the only British charged with the killing. Saudi sources have said they were arrested after Parry was taken from a caspion with Ms Gifford's bank card. However, *Al-Hayat* quoted security sources as saying they had considered charging a third woman. The Saudis believe she was present on two shopping trips when money was taken from Ms Gifford's account.

Diplomatic relations between

Britain and Saudi, which have been strained by the affair, are likely to be put under more pressure by the killing. The newspaper reported details of the consul's visit to the jail, telling how the women broke down when told that they were likely to be detained for a long time.

Deborah Parry told the consul that she wanted to withdraw her confession, said one of the paper's editors.

The fact that the paper is regarded as a direct channel to the Saudi government, complicated things, for the details of the meeting could have been passed on by one of two Saudi officials present, is likely to anger British diplomats. The news-

paper said a Saudi religious police officer and an Interior Ministry official were present.

Last night, the Foreign Office refused to comment. A senior source at *Al-Hayat* said: "You

are always accusing us of not having freedom of the press and yet when we try to publish the facts ... we are criticised."

The full details of Ms Parry's troubled life emerged yesterday when her sister, Sandra Asibor, gave an interview to the Express.

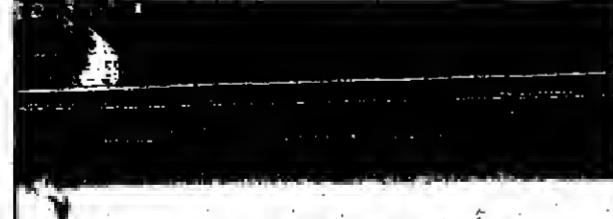
She said Ms Parry's mother had drowned while on holiday, her brother had died in a motorcycle accident and her father had died from a heart attack. Islam and the West, page 11.

Proof The Independent is good enough to eat

David Ushorne
New York

At last we've made it, at least in New York. Everyone is talking about *The Independent*. I have seen grown men drool.

All this is perfectly natural. This is a dazzling bunch down here in arty Soho, and at three dollars an issue (only one day late), *The Independent* does offer unparalleled intellectual value. Although why the prospect of unfolding our pages should lead to profuse salivation was less clear to me until I discovered that we are talking about *The Independent* as a restaurant. There it is, in the coolest climes of Tribeca on West Broadway, with its simple but oh-so-refined name emblazoned on its awning. The lettering is virtually indistinguishable from that of the masthead above. Its doors have only been



they venture, but the similarity of typefaces was purely coincidental.

Mr Hanks, it turns out, is a Briton and a long-time fan of yes, us. He was a partner in a London restaurant, the First Floor on the Portobello Road, in 1986 when this newspaper was launched and was an instant fan. "Independent" is just such a brilliant word, he explains. So good luck to *The Independent* and long may it prosper and long may we be the talk of New York.

Wilson chose 'traitor' to head spy inquiry

David Walker and John Crossland

The web of Cold War conspiracy spun around Harold Wilson is set to thicken after today's disclosure that as Labour Prime Minister he urged the appointment of Sir Roger Hollis, the suspect MI5 chief, to an official inquiry into the 1966 jail escape of a Soviet spy.

This is revealed in government papers at the Public Record Office which are released under the 30-year rule.

After the escape of the double agent George Blake from Wandsworth prison in southwest London, Wilson suggested that Hollis - recently retired as head of MI5 - join the inquiry chaired by Lord Mountbatten of Burma, the former chief of the defence staff.

London when Wilson was next Prime Minister, in the Seventies.

What the 1966 papers show beyond dispute is how distracted the Wilson regime was by security - from Communists in the unions to the reign of terror at No 10 by Wilson's personal security adviser, George Wigg, over leads to the press.

Even in official records MI6, the Secret Intelligence Service, was not referred to by name. Security briefs will pore over the report of the briefing after Blake's escape given by MI6's chief, Sir Dick White, to Wilson and the Opposition Leader, Edward Heath. White was complacent, insisting that even if Blake ended up in the Soviet Union (he did), he could not do any more damage to British interests.

"There was not therefore any very strong Soviet obligation to him. They might conceivably give him some money and leave him to work out his own future."

Landmark for
ancient mariners.
Spectacle for
modern travellers.

The towering
sun temple at
Konark in
Orissa once
gladdened
the hearts of
mariners
hauling opium

North East coast of India. Now it provides
gasp of admiration as one of India's most
vivid architectural treasures - a suspended
24-wheeled chariot belonging to chariot
god, Surya.

A few miles from the capital,
Bhubaneswar, you'll find Chilika, India's
largest lake, where rare migratory birds
wheel in for the winter. As for tiger and
leopard, few wildlife sanctuaries can rival
Simlipal to the north.

Orissa is one of India's best kept
secrets. Let yourself in on it.

For a free brochure call 01233 221999
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India
changes you

news

Record numbers die in prison

Jason Bennetto
Crime Correspondent

A record number of inmates committed suicide in jails in England and Wales last year, provoking anger among penal reformers who blamed overcrowding and harsher regimes on the rise.

Sixty-four prisoners took their own lives with at least a further 10 suicides in Scottish jails, including three at the country's only establishment for women.

This year's total, announced

yesterday, is four higher than the previous peak in 1994. The death tally has been gradually rising with 33 suicides in England and Wales in 1989.

In the year from April 1990 there were 39 suicides in prisons in England and Wales, rising to 47 in 1993 and 62 in 1994.

Deborah Coles, co-director of Inquest, a pressure group for people who die in custody, said: "It's a chilling reminder of the reality of prison life. My fear is that the continuing trend to imprison people and combined with increasingly harsh regimes

will lead to an ever growing number of deaths."

Clare Sparks, policy officer of the Prison Reform Trust, said: "The record number of suicides is a result of tremendous financial constraints and over-crowding in the prison service in 1996.

"This has led to cuts in important measures such as education, recreation, and the treatment of mentally ill inmates." She added that prisoners on remand, who were particularly vulnerable, were not getting enough attention.

Richard Tilt, the director of

the Prison Service, stressed that because of the increased number of inmates, the number of suicides proportionate to the prison population - which at an average 35,200 this year was 4,200 higher than in 1995 - had actually fallen.

But he added: "I am concerned that, while proportionate in the population, suicides have slightly reduced, the level of self-inflicted deaths is still high.

"We will do everything possible to reduce the number next year. I believe the pre-

ventive strategies we have developed at prisons over the last two years have helped and will continue to do so."

Suicide prevention strategies include risk awareness training for staff, allowing Samaritan volunteers to visit prisoners regularly, and "listener" schemes which involve training prisoners to provide support for other inmates.

In Scotland, where last year's figures have yet to be released, the problem of prison suicides has been highlighted by the spate of deaths at Compton Vale

women's prison in Stirling.

An investigation has begun into the latest death, that of Yvonne Gilmour, 22, from Glasgow, who was found dead on Christmas Eve. Despite being on suicide watch, which meant she was regularly observed by staff in her cell, she still managed to hang herself with a bed sheet.

A report on previous deaths described conditions at the prison as a "mixture between a casualty clearing station and a psychiatric ward".

Floating prison, page 6

Harding fortune goes to wife and mistress

Vanessa Thorpe

The £200m left by Matthew Harding, the chairman of Cheltenham Football Club who died in a helicopter crash while returning from an away match at Bolton last October, is to be divided between his children, his wife and his girlfriend.

His will, published yesterday, makes no mention of the football club in which Mr Harding invested more than £40m during his lifetime.

The inheritance will be divided according to instructions left with two executors, Mark Killick and Margaret Nugent. Their instructions are to include provision for his twin sons by his wife Ruth and for Ella, his daughter by girlfriend Vicki Jaramillo.

In the will Mr Harding, aged 42 at the time of his death, also names Jessica, Ms Jaramillo's daughter from a previous relationship.

The shareholders in his former business, The Benfield Group, will also benefit. Mr Harding organised a successful management buy-out of the company in 1988.

The will was witnessed by England football coach Glenn Hoddle and by a London taxi driver called Grant Davis.

It hears the date of 22 May 1996, exactly two months before the fatal accident in Cheshire which also killed four other men.

Chelsea FC may be left with financial problems if Benfield decide to sell the £20m shares held in Chelsea Village, the company which owns the club.

Mr Harding also owned the £16.5m freehold on the Stamford Bridge ground, in south-west London, paid out for the new North Stand, and regularly made cash available for buying new players.



Blow for youth: The Waubonsie Valley High School Marching Warriors Band, from Illinois, playing at Wembley Grand Hall for the London Parade Festival, a series of concerts by young musicians from around the world. It culminates in a parade in the capital today. Photograph: Keith Dobney

Protect the weak, urges Carey



Dr Carey: 'It is a good time to search our souls'

The Archbishop of Canterbury called on society to make an "uncompromising commitment to protect the weak and vulnerable", in his New Year address broadcast today.

Dr George Carey also recalled the Dunblane tragedy in which 16 infants and one teacher were killed and other crimes against children and adults in his remarks made five minutes after midnight, and shown on BBC1 at 1am.

Dr Carey anticipated the general election and reflected on the kind of society that we have become - and the kind we

wish to be - as the end of the century approaches. He said: "In looking back, there will be many who will be deeply thankful that 1996 has ended.

"For those of us who love children, 1996 will forever speak of Dunblane and some of the other terrible crimes committed against young children and adults alike. It is a reminder that at the very heart of a decent society there must be an uncompromising commitment to protecting the weak and vulnerable.

"None of us knows what 1997 will bring. Nationally, we shall be facing a general election. Individually, all kinds of challenges lie ahead, and many uncertainties.

"As we look to the millennium, many of us are asking questions about the kind of people and the kind of society we want to be. It is a good time to search our souls."

Dr Carey said he remembered the 1,400th anniversary of Augustine - the first Archbishop of Canterbury in 597 - as very heart of a decent society there must be an uncompromising commitment to protecting the weak and vulnerable.

"None of us knows what 1997 will bring. Nationally, we shall be facing a general election. Individually, all kinds of challenges lie ahead, and many uncertainties.

The images show outstretched hands praying and the Archbishop said: "Hands lifted in prayer must result in hands reaching out to all people with the love of God."

Dr Carey ended with a prayer for the New Year: "Eternal God, I place myself into your hands this coming year. May we walk together, hand in hand, and in my actions may your will be done. Amen."

significant shorts

Legal aid for overdose baby's parents

A couple who are planning legal action against a hospital after their baby was given an overdose of morphine have been granted legal aid.

Kieren Luscombe was six weeks old when he was given 10 times the correct dose of the pain-killer during a hernia operation at Treliske hospital, Cornwall, because his prescription had been misread. He turned blue and

A brain scan revealed no abnormalities, but the family's solicitor, Philip Snell, said yesterday that it would be known for several years whether there was any long-term brain damage.

A medical report will also be prepared on Kieren's mother Julie, who lives near Redruth. She was at the hospital and suffered psychological trauma.

British Airways extinguishes cigarettes

Smokers face a further challenge from today as 90 per cent of British Airways flights - including Concorde - become smoke free.

More than 350 additional daily flights to Africa, Europe, the Middle and Far East and North America will join the current 750 non-smoking flights.

British Airways' chief executive, Bob Ayling, said: "More than eight out of 10 passengers now request non-smoking seats and the numbers are growing."

Smoking is being retained on certain routes where there is demand: Spain, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, Philippines, Pakistan, Latin America, Russia, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria and Azerbaijan. BA will continue to sell duty-free cigarettes on its flights.

Cullen wins promotion

Lord Cullen, the Dunblane inquiry judge, has been promoted to become Scotland's second most senior judge. He will become Lord Justice Clerk, succeeding Lord Ross, who is retiring.

The appointment, announced by the Prime Minister's office, carries a salary of £121,190, a rise of more than £4,000 on the £117,000 salary of senior Scottish judges.

Sex-act disc withdrawn

A store chain has stopped selling a computer games disc after it was found to contain an explicit sex scene.

The HMV record group is clearing the CD-ROM from its shelves and yesterday offered refunds to customers.

A woman who bought the 3,000-game Spectre CD 1996 for £7.99 in HMV in Manchester discovered a sequence depicting a woman performing a sex act on a man. An HMV spokesman apologised to anyone who had been offended by the disc, which is from Germany.

Christie brother inquest opens

An inquest was opened yesterday into the death of the brother of the Olympic sprinter Linford Christie.

Westminster Coroners' Court in central London heard that Russell Christie, 34, of Shepherd's Bush, west London, died from a stab wound to his neck.

No members of the Christie family were present at the hearing, which was adjourned.

A man has been charged with murder.

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

	Overseas Subscriptions
Austria	Sc140
Belgium	Br180
Italy	14,500
Caribbean	Ps300
Madagascar	Ec325
Cyprus	Ec120
Malta	43 cents
Denmark	Dir18
Norway	Nr20
Irish Republic	45p
Portugal	Ec325
France	Fr12
Spain	Ps300
East, America, Africa and India	Ec14.00
Zone 1 (Middle East, America, Africa and India)	Ec14.00
Zone 2 (Far East, America, Africa and India)	Ec14.00
Zone 3 (Australia and New Zealand)	Ec14.00
Zone 4 (Oceania)	Ec14.00
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Zone 96 (North America)	Ec14.00

Pensioner's death after £11m win and troubles of others confirm critics' dire warnings



Mukhtar Mohidin The lottery's first big winner. Initially fled the country



Lee Ryan Win coincided with 18-month sentence for handling stolen cars



Mark Gardiner Ex-wives and girlfriends went into print after his £22m joint win

All part of life's lottery

Louise Jury

Twenty months ago Ernie Bailey, a widower, won £1m on the National Lottery. Today he is dead.

Already in poor health, the 63-year-old former factory worker put on weight, continued to smoke, and was found lifeless in the bed of his new luxury home on Sunday.

Yesterday his family denied claims that he had hanged himself to death on beer and takeaways. "Ernie had had three heart attacks and simply didn't have the strength to binge," said a family friend, Terry Latham.

"If anyone knew his medical history, they would know that his death wouldn't come as a big shock. He was an ill man. As far as the family is concerned, Ernie died in his sleep and that's all there is to it."

But in the wake of a series of sad stories which must have made the lottery organisers Camelot despair, his death is a reminder that winning can be a burden as well as a boon.

Like the misfortune befalling couples who speak of their

happiness to *Hello!* magazine, the curse of the lottery comes down as if that bright blue promotional finger is really wagging a warning: It could be you.

When Ernie Bailey won his fortune in April last year on a ticket shared with his younger son, 23-year-old Derek, he did not immediately head for the Caribbean or Florida as others have done. He packed eight of his family into a caravan for six and headed for North Wales.

He did abandon the crime-ridden Castle Vale council estate in Birmingham and moved to a luxury bungalow in Little Aston Park, five miles away in the more upmarket Sutton Coldfield.

But he brought his older son, Mark, 31, into the money not by giving him a million or two but employing him as chauffeur for his new range of smart cars at a reported salary of £500-a-week. He employed Mark's wife, Tracey, as his cleaner. Mr Bailey senior did, however, buy the couple a bungalow just along from his in the same cul-de-sac.

Yesterday, four pints of milk and a bottle of orange juice stood uncollected outside the new millionaire's home where the curtains stayed tightly drawn. Snow covered his BMW, a Renault Espace and a Chevrolet. He had



Ernie Bailey Won £11m in April 1995. Found dead in his bed on Sunday

enjoyed them for less than two years. Whether his new-found wealth encouraged him to overindulge cannot be known. But critics of the lottery argue

that the dramatic change in lifestyle a jackpot brings can be devastating.

Claire Rayner, the agony aunt, said: "Over the years when people have said to me, 'I want to be rich and famous', I've said, 'Doing what?'. It's very hard to describe to people how destructive that can be.

"Some people handle it terribly well, but in general the most terrible thing to happen to a human being is change. This is why people have problems when they get married or pass exams. An ambition achieved is like a death."

She guessed Mr Bailey probably lost more than he gained through his wife. "If the man did drink too much, it was probably an attempt to comfort himself for what he had lost. I hate the lottery in its present form. It's lovely to give people the chance of £10,000 or, at a pinch, £100,000. But you shouldn't have enough to move too far out of the life you've got."

Certainly other lottery winners have had their problems. Mukhtar Mohidin, the Blackburo factory worker who won £17.9m, initially fled the coun-

try, then temporarily split from his wife while his family feuded over the spoils.

Robbie Woods, a 24-year-old garage mechanic, found himself besieged by gold-diggers. Manly Mercer, 54, had a heart attack in the excitement of becoming a millionaire and the jackpot win by 32-year-old Lee Ryan coincided with an 18-month jail sentence for handling stolen cars.

Most notoriously of all, Mark Gardiner and Paul Maddison shared a record-breaking £22.6m jackpot which put a strain on their friendship and produced a string of ex-wives, girlfriends and friends queuing up to curse their luck.

Yet some remain down-to-earth. The 33 members of the Camden Housing Project in London who shared a £10m jackpot returned to work with a better class of biscuit the only visible sign of their success.

A Camelot spokeswoman said: "We have 30 million people playing every week and it's a fun pastime for them. Most people who win are delightedly happy. They just can't wait to get their ticket in and claim the money."

the British rights to the Australian soap *Home and Away* and the mini-series *A Woman of Substance* starring Liam Neeson and Deborrah Kerr.

The contract also includes an option agreement to *An Evil Love*, a biography of Frederick West by the former Fleet Street journalist Geoffrey Wansell.

The Bishop of Gloucester, the Right Rev David Bentley, said yesterday he "deplored" the news that a film could be made and Douglas French, Conservative MP for Gloucester, said: "This is another sordid example of commercial exploitation of tragic events which the residents of Gloucester would prefer to forget."

Alex Carlile, Liberal Democrat spokesman on justice and legal affairs, urged Sir Nicholas to step in to stop the sale of the film rights.

"It is deeply shocking that the Official Solicitor, who is a government official, is entering, in his public role, into a contract for the sale of material which is derived from one of the greatest public misdeeds of modern times," he said.

Doug West said: "The relatives of the victims have had enough. I have had enough. I was hoping to have a good New Year and put all this behind me. Now it will all come up again. It's a hit sick as far as I am concerned. Let's hope the idea drops off and the film never comes out."

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Blur turn against Blair...



Sticking to business: Damon Albarn (left) recording for Blur, Britpop's former crown princes, who are ready for a comeback with a new album after giving centre stage to the pop-star antics of Oasis, led by Liam Gallagher (right)



...in new battle of the bands

David Lister Arts News Editor

Paul McCartney's knighthood seems to have inspired a new respectability in rock music. Blur, once Britpop's brightest lights, and arch rivals to Oasis, have emerged from a year's exile extolling asceticism and maturity – and despising the Labour leader Tony Blair.

While Oasis had a well-documented year of global success and laddish behaviour, Blur retreated from the limelight. They have returned as new men.

Damon Albarn, the heart-throbbing leader of the band, is disdainful of the pop-star antics of his rivals. Instead, he advocates studious concentration and drinking only in moderation, if at all. And he has become the first rock star to urge

the virtues of a coalition government.

It is barely a year ago that Blur seemed likely to outshine Oasis. It was Blur not Oasis who won the much-hyped battle for the first number one single from their respective new albums in 1995. But after that Oasis's fame erupted, and Blur retreated into splendid isolation, seemingly forgotten by their fans. In the Radio 1 listeners' poll this week, Oasis had two times in the listeners' all-time top 10, Blur had none...

Now, shortly to release a new album, the former crown princes of Britpop are back. The band's front man, Albarn, remains sparing of speech, but what he does say signifies a new respectability that could see him following in the steps of Sir Paul McCartney in 30 years' time.

Asked by *Q* magazine how he would be voting in the general election, Albarn says: "Blair has a worrying conservative streak and he's taken his own personality so far into the arena of appeasement he's no longer a valid leader of a socialist party. But I will be voting for him, and Labour will get in. Just don't expect any changes, that's all. We'd do better with a coalition government."

On the subject of rock stars behaving like rock stars he is quick to point out his own outfit's new asceticism. "Graham has stopped drinking completely," he says of one fellow band member. "I still drink but in small bouts, although I've never really done it to excess."

Pointedly, he stresses that the year-long making of the band's new record required "concentration" and a rejection of the

tabloid antics of certain other groups. He says: "It wouldn't have been possible to make this record if we'd been visible, or doing big gigs, or splashed over the tabloids. It required a lot of concentration."

And Albarn even places himself in the vanguard of the middle-aged, firing a broadside at one of the most popular rock stars in the world, Bono of U2, sounding for all the world like a parent in the Sixties, as he accuses Bono of not being able to sing tastefully.

Asked if he is looking forward to the new U2 album, Albarn replies: "I'd like a lot of U2 times if they'd just take the vocal off. I have a problem with Bono's voice. The rest of them make tasteful music... He'd be a lot more respected by musicians if he'd tone down those mannerisms."

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THE 1966 PAPERS

MI5 fuelled fears of Communists in unions

Public Record Office files released today confirm the suspicion that the Security Service, MI5, extensively penetrated the British trade union movement in the Sixties. Secret reports from agents convinced the Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, of Communist Party involvement before he made his celebrated remark about the 1966 seamen's strike being master-minded by a "tighty/knif group of politically motivated men".

But the official record of Cabinet discussions shows that

Labour ministers had deep sympathy with the seamen - whose ranks included the present deputy leader of the Labour Party, John Prescott. In Cabinet they even admitted the strike had been precipitated by the shipowners. In private they said the finding of the court of inquiry into the strike - which the government backed in public - gave the seamen less than they deserved.

However, ministers were also worried that seamen were being misled by the *ad hoc* negoti-

ating committee putting their case to shipowners. In extended sessions at No 10, Wilson met both groups during the dispute in an effort to mediate. But he had been warned by the Security Service that one of the committee, Gordon Norris, was seeing the industrial organiser of the Communist Party of Great Britain, Bert Ramelson, more or less daily "to plan the next move in the strike and the outcome of discussions at the executive of the National Union of Seamen".

Reports by David Walker and John Crossland

Edward Heath, leader of the Opposition, attacked Wilson for alleging a conspiracy without naming names. In response, Wilson offered him a secret briefing courtesy of MI5. At it he told him of a "close correlation between decisions taken at meetings of the Communist Party, the commentary of the *Morning Star* [the CP newspaper] the next day and the decision subsequently reached by the National Union of Seamen".

For instance, the key decision to reject the court of inquiry report was taken the day before the report was published and the Communist Party had decided that the Executive Committee of the National Union of Seamen should be persuaded at its meeting on the following day to continue the strike. The executive committee reached the decision the Communists wanted. Earlier that year Wilson had been told of Communist influ-

ence in the National Union of Railways - information secured by an MI5 informant, whose name has been blanked out from the official papers now on public view. A threatened railway strike had been called off at the last moment.

In February, a Home Office official minutes Wilson's principal private secretary. "From the outset [the Communists] viewed the dispute in predominantly political terms and their objective was to discredit and bring to a halt the current in-

members on the eight-man negotiating committee, including the chairman, Dan Kelly, and its influence with the district councils meant that it could rely on a flow of militant resolutions to strengthen any wavering on the executive council itself."

The agent concluded: "In retrospect, the party views its efforts as a well-fought rearguard action in a worthwhile fight. It believes that the government and the railway board have bought nothing more than time."

Cabinet plan for ads on BBC radio

A meeting of the Wilson Cabinet approved in principle the idea that the BBC should take advertising on one of its radio channels to bail it out of a financial crisis.

It was only after several further meetings and some spirited lobbying from the BBC's then vice-chairman, Lord Fulton, and its director-general, Hugh Greene, that the proposal was dropped. Labour in those days was attracted by advertising as a source of revenue for public purposes.

At a January Cabinet it was proposed that council rates could be kept down by giving councils a percentage of the proceeds from setting up local commercial radio stations. The proposal was deferred pending the conclusions of a large-scale review of councils.

US tapped for funding of OU

Lack of money to pay for Harold Wilson's brainchild, the Open University, prompted the Prime Minister to suggest American firms and foundations should be approached for donations.

He asked his legal adviser, Lord Goodman, to make soundings. Wilson himself said he would contact the president of the Ford Foundation, the former White House official McGeorge Bundy.

Murder for eastern stars

The might of Her Majesty's diplomatic service was mobilised to ensure a new generation of British ambassadors abroad - pop stars - encountered no problems.

From Japan a chargé d'affaires reportedly reported rumours of an assassination attempt on the Beatles and said he proposed to do all he could to make a success of a forthcoming tour by the Rolling Stones.

Argentina's bitter Cup

Foreign Office files report how England's victory against Argentina in the 1966 World Cup provoked an anti-British backlash in Buenos Aires, with the British embassy receiving numbers of "abusive" calls. After an ill-tempered game, the England manager, Alf Ramsey, stopped the players swapping shirts and called the Argentines "animals".

Aberfan crisis

Alf Robens, chairman of the National Coal Board at the time of the Aberfan disaster, only seems to have survived thanks to his own marked reluctance to resign and Wilson's reluctance to fire him.

Other ministers felt that he should carry the can after a Tribunal of Inquiry report which Wilson himself said was a "damaging indictment of the NCB".

Minus 4
(too cold
for an
ostrich
to bury
its head)

Goldsmith
party is
scorned
amateur

For Adverts
etc

Marcia and the war of the photocopier

During 1966 Harold Wilson's political secretary, Marcia Williams (now Baroness Falkender), engaged in a pitched battle with the civil service private secretary Derek Mitchell over office facilities while leaks to the press produced a constant stream of self-exculpatory memoranda to the Prime Minister from officials and party colleagues.

Ostensibly the civil servants looked after official business while Mrs Williams - who had been positively vetted by the Security Service - looked after Wilson's party and constituency work. Both sides bitched about one another.

Barely a year after Labour took power in October 1964 Mr Mitchell was penning pompous notes asking if it was not time Mrs Williams got her own "political" photocopier. His assistant, Jane Parsons, evidently kept a surreptitious eye on the Rand Xerox 914. In one note she alleged that a "considerable amount" of party political work was being done on the copier.

At the beginning of the 1966 election campaign, No 10 staff proposed that use of the official machine would be charged to Transport House, Labour HQ. If Transport House were to supply its own copier, "security drills" would have to ensure "it cannot be used to make quick copies of classified papers".

The official files are stuffed with memos from civil servants and party officials to the Prime Minister denying they had talked to journalists and so

were the source of leaks. Even Wilson's security adviser, the Paymaster General, George Wigg, felt the need to submit a long typewritten memo to Wilson in July 1966 explaining who he had and who he had not seen.

Wigg was embarrassed because he had seen a *Sunday Times* journalist, Stephen Fay, who in turn denied he was the source of a leak from the conversation to *Private Eye*, which sought to pooh-pooh Harold Wilson's suggestion that Communists were behind industrial unrest in Britain that year.

Another story, about Clyde-side dock workers getting a pay and conditions deal which appeared to break the prevailing pay norm provoked a flurry of denials. Trevor Lloyd Hughes, the civil service press officer at No 10, sent a memo to George Wigg in his capacity as security chief listing all his dealings with the press. The party press officer based at No 10, Gerald Kaufman (now a Labour MP), went through his diary before coming up with a clincher. He could not have briefed the press on the relevant day because he was away from the office that day "observing the Jewish New Year".

Mr Wilson went on to authorise the compilation of "source books", which indexed press cuttings by code, together with lists of journalists, "so the subject could be traced from beginning to end and ministers and MPs' statements can be examined as well as journalists".

Sweeteners for Catholic schools

The same Labour government that in 1966 looked with "benevolent neutrality" on reforms to the abortion and sexual offences law also increased the rate of grant to Roman Catholic schools.

Prime Minister Harold Wilson, himself one of the most cautious members of the Cabinet when it came to making government time available for private members' bills to reform the laws on homosexuality, urged his Secretary of State for Education, Tony Crosland, to cultivate the Catholic and Anglican bishops.

The papers show that was something Crosland, otherwise renowned as a free-thinking liberal, was happy to do. After conversations with the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool Crosland proposed increasing the state grant to Catholic schools to 80 per cent and making new grants to Catholic training colleges.

His reasoning was that the money would sweeten the church authorities towards comprehensives schools.

But for all its reputation for social reform the Wilson government backed away from two measures discussed in the social services Cabinet committee. One was to redistribute money spent on family allowances to ensure it went only to the needy. The second was to replace "national assistance" (as income support was then called) with a universal "income guarantee" clawed back from the better off through income tax.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and chairman of the Cabinet's social services committee, Wilson wondered whether they needed to "rush" their thinking about allowing local social services departments to dispense contraceptive advice.

Wilson, MP for the Merseyside seat of Huyton, was clearly concerned about Catholic opinion. But the Cabinet committee was enthusiastic. "The fact that one section of the community was not sufficient reason for withholding them from others. A report from the Church of England Board of Social Responsibility in favour of extending the availability of contraception helped.

But in language that would not be considered politically correct today, Houghton said he was in favour of more contraception because "the problems of our social services are aggravated by the calls made upon them by the families of feckless, sub-normal and irresponsible parents".

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The Americans were more than enthusiastic. According to Wilson, reporting back to the Cabinet in August after a trip

to see President Lyndon Johnson in Washington, the US said the British should set up a committee to examine transatlantic monetary links.

The planned link-up with the US indicates the extent of the Wilson government's desperation when, in the wake of the seamen's dispute and renewed hostilities in Vietnam, sterling started to plummet.

Under pressure from colleagues Wilson even agreed a dramatic Cabinet "think-in" on whether the pound should be devalued - since coming to office in October 1964 he and

the effect of this change will be included in the Annual Update of payments in January 1998.



Source of tension: Wilson and Lady Falkender in 1975. As his political secretary she engaged in battle with official Downing Street staff



Wembley final: Manager Alf Ramsey intervenes in a shirt exchange between teams after England's World Cup victory over Argentina



Devastation: Scene of the tragedy at Aberfan after Pantglas Junior School was engulfed by a mountain of rain-soaked coal slurry

Currency union with US floated

Desperation over sterling led the Wilson government in 1966 to propose a currency union with the United States.

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Chancellor James Callaghan had tried to smother all talk of cutting the pound's value.

Hidden in a secret annex to the main Cabinet papers, the report of the debate on 19 July takes an unprecedented six pages and is likely to be read by historians as one of the crucial turning points in the post-war history of Britain.

Though Wilson said "if the choice lay simply between devaluation and maintenance of full employment he would prefer to devalue," he insisted there was an alternative - deflation.

An unnamed Cabinet member

said the cuts would have to be savage. "A fundamental weakness in the government's present policy was the fact we were seeking to maintain a position in the world which our economy could not support - the only practical course was to abandon our overstatement of our overseas commitment."

The Cabinet was also told it

should cut "unproductive expenditure, eg on social benefits,

health and housing until our rate of growth was adequate to support the burden of the social expenditure we wished to undertake."

A Dog Called Etc

A Puppy Called Etc

Daily Poem

A Dog Called Etc

A Puppy Called Etc

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Minus 4 (too cold for an ostrich to bury its head)

Vanessa Thorpe

Revellers in Trafalgar Square and in the Highlands of Scotland shivered in temperatures of minus 4C during one of the coldest New Year's Eves for 15 years.

Two people died as the icy weather blew in from Russia where anyone foolish enough to see in the New Year in Red Square, Moscow, would have had to brave wind blasts of minus 15C.

Temperatures in some parts of the Britain were as low as 10C, with Kent and Sussex taking the brunt. Up to



Cold stroll: Ostriches farmed at Elvington, near York, caught in a snow blizzard yesterday

Photograph: John Giles/PA

10cms of snow fell on the South Downs, while the London Weather Centre reported 12cms in parts of East Sussex. Southern England last saw such snows in 1981 when 15cms fell. Kent suffered particularly bad

last night with black ice and drifting snows and speed restrictions widely imposed.

A 57-year-old Suffolk farmworker collapsed and died while digging his car out of snow and a 40-year-

old woman fell and froze to death while walking her dog on Sunday in the Cardiff area. Main roads around Penrith were blocked by drifting snow and ice while many roads in Yorkshire, Northumberland, Cumbria

and Kent were only passable in four-wheel drive vehicles. The AA stepped up the number of its national patrols by 20 per cent and warned drivers to revise any plans to travel far.

The charity Crisis decided to keep open 13 of the Christmas shelters that were due to close down yesterday.

A Eurostar spokesman said yesterday that the cold weather had

probably been to blame for Monday's breakdown. Snow caked on the undercarriage suspected to have melted and caused the power failure which stranded 300 passengers for two and half hours.

Goldsmith party is scorned as amateur

Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party is run by a group of amateurs who have mustered the support of only about 15,000 people nationwide, a defector from the party said yesterday.

John Bostock, who resigned as a Conservative Party agent last summer to work for the new organisation, has now moved on again, to the UK Independence Party.

He said that in some parliamentary seats the Referendum Party did not have a single supporter. Sir James and his supporters plan to field a candidate at the general election in every seat where the sitting MP fails to back a referendum to Europe.

Mr Bostock, who was paid £24,000 per year by the party, was a regional campaign manager, responsible for overseeing the fight in 71 seats. However, he became convinced that the party's appeal was severely limited and that its ambitious plans were based on "a complete and utter fallacy".

"The whole thing is a nonsense. Fifteen-thousand out of 58 million people is a drop in the ocean," he said of the number of pledges of support. "It is a nothing party... The average Conservative party association has about 1,000 members."

Mr Bostock's comments will lend weight to the arguments of those who say Sir James's pro-

ject is implausible and that it will not catch the popular mood in Britain.

The former Conservative will now stand as a candidate in Preston for the UK Independence Party, which believes that Britain should withdraw from the European Union and that trade links with Europe should be renegotiated.

Yesterday he said the Referendum Party simply lacked organisation, and that there was no real co-ordination between its departments. A promised list of supporters had failed to materialise.

"It is a campaign run with amateurs. People are leaving all the time, for many of the same reasons - lack of organisation and disillusionment."

Mr Bostock accused Sir James of "back-tracking" on his original suggested referendum question - whether Britain should be governed from Westminster or Brussels. The Referendum Party leader now prefers a "multi-optioinal" plebiscite accommodating a "diversity of views".

A spokeswoman for the Referendum Party, Priti Patel, said it did not have members because it was non-political, campaigning simply on a single issue. Mr Bostock was "clearly slightly bitter" because he had only managed to recruit five candidates in the North-west. She said there were now 48 candidates ready to stand in the area. "We have replaced him with a very strong regional team."

DAILY POEM

A Puppy Called Puberty/ A Dog Called Elderly

By Adrian Mitchell

*It was like keeping a puppy in your underpants
A secret puppy you weren't allowed to show to anyone
Not even your best friend or your worst enemy*

*You wanted to pat him stroke him cuddle him
All the time but you weren't supposed to touch him*

*He only slept for five minutes at a time
Then he'd suddenly perk up his head
In the middle of school medical inspection
And always on bus rides
So you had to climb down from the upper deck
All bent double to smuggle the puppy off the bus
Without the buxom conductoress spotting
Your waddled and ticketless stowaway*

*Jumping up, wet-nosed, eagerly wagging -
He only stopped being a nuisance
When you were alone together
Pretending to be doing your homework
But really gazing at each other
Through hot and hazy daydreams
Of those beautiful schoolgirls on the bus
With knees bouncing in their sweaters*

A Dog Called Elderly

*and now I have a dog called Elderly
And she never wants to do
that, now and then be let out for a piss
but especially the rest of his lifetime
sleeping on my lap in front of the fire.*

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West Bank breakthrough: As Israel agrees to quit holy city, Palestinians prepare to up their demands

Hebron deal ends months of wrangling

Eric Silver
Jerusalem

After months of nit-picking negotiation, false optimism and premature predictions, Israel and the Palestinians finally agreed yesterday on the terms of Israel's redeployment in Hebron, the last West Bank town under occupation.

David Bar-Ilan, a senior adviser to the Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, said last night: "The agreement is practically finalised. We expect a meeting between the two leaders within 24 hours to tie up any loose ends."

The summit between Mr Netanyahu and the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, could probably have taken place last night. But the Prime Minister did not want to leave the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, where MPs were voting on the third reading of a contentious 1997 budget.

The two leaders will initial the deal, which will then be submitted later this week to the Israeli cabinet, where Mr Netanyahu faces the threat of a revolt by at least one-third of the 18 right-wing and religious ministers. As a sop to coalition back-benchers, the Prime Minister will also present the agreement to the Knesset for debate.

The Israeli troops may redeploy, however, immediately after the cabinet has endorsed the terms. They do not have to be ratified by parliament.

Mr Netanyahu's majority is not at risk. Labour and the left-wing Meretz opposition parties, the fathers of the Oslo breakthrough, have announced that they will vote for the Hebron deal.

The expected absences, or hostile voting, by his own colleagues in the Likud party will, however, dent Mr Netanyahu's authority. No Prime Minister

relishes being beholden to the opposition for major policy decisions.

Two senior Likud ministers, the former general Ariel Sharon and Benny Begin, son of the Likud party's founder, Menachem Begin, have come out against the deal. So has Rafael Eitan, a former chief of staff who ran on a joint list with Likud in last May's elections.

Four ministers and 14 dissenting coalition backbenchers stayed away when a maverick right-wing no-confidence motion on the Hebron talks was put to a vote on Monday.

Mr Begin, the Minister of Science, explained his opposition to *The Independent* last night: "Any areas relinquished to the PLO immediately become safe havens for terrorists. Arafat has violated numerous major articles of the Oslo agreement. I don't want further experiments that hand over our security to PLO terrorist sub-contractors."

The new Hebron agreement sticks to the basic pattern of the

Jets attack Hizbollah

Nabatiyah (Reuter) — Israeli planes raided suspected guerrilla targets in south Lebanon last night shortly after a guerrilla attack on two Israeli army posts, guerrilla and pro-Israeli militia sources said.

A Hizbollah spokesman in Beirut said the air attack targeted the Jabal Sojind area in Iqlim al-Toufah ridge, which is used by the pro-Iranian guerrillas to attack Israeli forces occupying a border zone to the south. About 1,000 Israeli troops hold the south Lebanon zone, set up by Israel in 1985 to protect its northern border area from guerrilla raids.

deal negotiated by Shimon Peres's Labour administration a year ago. Mr Netanyahu claimed, to scepticism on both sides of the Knesset this week, that he had succeeded in strengthening security provisions for the town's 450 Jewish settlers in 10 particulars.

Israeli troops will evacuate 80-85 per cent of the disputed holy city, traditionally seen as the burial place of Abraham, the common ancestor of Jews and Arabs. They will stay in the remaining 15-20 per cent to protect the settlers. All but 15,000 of the 150,000 Arab residents will come under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority and the protection of the Palestinian police.

The agreement provides for a buffer zone around the Jewish quarter, where Palestinian police will be limited to short-range automatic weapons. The height of new Palestinian building around the enclaves will be restricted to prevent sniping. The Arab town council will not have any control over building inside the Jewish areas.

Israeli and Palestinian forces will mount joint patrols. Israel also reserves the right to conduct hot-pursuit and pre-emptive raids inside the Palestinian areas. However, officials admit that similar provisions to those in the evacuated town have not been implemented. They are unlikely to be invoked in Hebron either.

The key to success or failure will be the degree of trust that grows up between the respective security services.

Last night, Israeli officials were predicting a compromise on the Palestinians' last-minute demand for a role in the security around the Tomb of the Patriarchs, a shrine which is sacred to both Jews and Muslims. The original agreement left security around the tomb exclusively in Israeli hands.

Each leader is determined to extract the maximum advantage

for the lowest price. Each is looking over his shoulder at a sceptical constituency that needs to be convinced that he is not selling out. Since Mr Netanyahu's coalition of right-wing and religious parties came to power last June, there has been little of the goodwill or the enthusiasm that carried the previous Labour Government through recurrent crises.

At the top of the Palestinian agenda is a further Israeli redeployment from rural areas on the West Bank which remained under Israel's military supervision after the two previous withdrawals. This evacuation ought to have started in September 1996, but in practice nothing moved.

The "Oslo II" agreement, exactly one year earlier, established the principle of further withdrawals, but left the details to be negotiated. Mr Arafat has tried to link the Hebron deal to a timetable for the West Bank villages. The next few weeks will prove whether he succeeded.

The Palestinians are also douring for the release of about 6,000 Arab security prisoners, including a handful of women, still in Israeli jails. Mr Netanyahu has undertaken gradually to free all those who have not murdered Israelis.

The Palestinians want Israel to fulfil its pledge to open a "safe passage" route for Palestinian traffic between the autonomous regions of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The black-and-white signs have been in place for two years, but the Israelis have not worked out how to allow vehicles to flow without enabling suicide bombers to get into Israel.

Lower down the list, the Palestinians want to operate an airport in the Gaza strip. Up to now, Israel has stood by its right under the Oslo accords to control the Palestinian borders. If the airport is to open, Israel will need to be sure it does not serve as an arms gateway. Similar reservations apply to a new port the Palestinians want to build in Gaza.

On their side, the Israelis are insisting that Mr Arafat extradite Palestinian gunmen who attack Israelis and shelter under the Palestinian flag in Jericho or Gaza. Palestinian spokesmen maintain that Oslo allows them to arrest and try the offenders themselves, which they have done.

Mr Netanyahu is still pressing Mr Arafat to repudiate the clauses in the 1964 Palestinian National Covenant, which call for the destruction of the Jewish state. The PLO leader has said since 1993 that the clauses were null and void, but the Israeli right is not satisfied.

More tangibly, Israel is demanding that the Palestinian Authority disarm the Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Popular Front militias, which persist in waging the old "armed struggle" from within Palestinian territory.

And after that, the two sides

can get down to negotiating the "final status" of Jerusalem and the 127 West Bank and Gaza Jewish settlements; compensation for the Palestinian refugees of the 1948 and 1967 wars and Palestinian sovereignty.



Provocation: Two settlers praying in an Arab home in Hebron in a bid to expand the Jewish presence in the city before the Israeli withdrawal

Hurdles block way to final peace

Eric Silver
Jerusalem

Once the Hebron redeployment is out of the way, Israel and the Palestinians will present competing shopping lists for continuing the shambling Oslo peace process.

The negotiations promise to be as slow, as grudging and as volatile as those over Hebron — the City of the Patriarchs — which dragged on for nine months beyond the March redeployment deadline.

An Israeli political science professor, Yaron Ezrahi, has dubbed Oslo a "peace of attrition". Benjamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat seem bent on proving him right.

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EU tells Milosevic to recognise polls

Judith Ingram
Associated Press
Peter Greste
Reuter

Belgrade — Europeans yesterday pressed President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia to declare whether he would reverse his policy and recognise opposition victories in local elections. France warned of isolation if he failed to do so.

Diplomats from Britain, the Netherlands, Italy and the European Union presented a request to the foreign ministry for Mr Milosevic to answer the findings of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

The OSCE declared that the opposition had won elections in 14 communities, including those in Serbia's two largest cities, Belgrade and Niš.

The annulment of those elections has led to daily protests, the biggest challenge to the Serbian leader since he took power in 1987.

The diplomats said they had the impression that the foreign ministry had accepted what the OSCE said. But there was no word from Mr Milosevic, and it is believed that the foreign ministry's attitude is not necessarily a clue to his approach.

The opposition Zajedno (together) coalition planned to press home its message with a huge street party including alarm clocks and a cacophony of bells which were to toll for Mr Milosevic on the stroke of midnight. The street spectacle took advantage of Belgrade's traditional enthusiasm for celebrating the New Year to help maintain the enthusiasm of Zajedno's supporters whose ranks have dwindled since sub-zero weather set in a week ago. It is also a way round an interior ministry ban on marches that disrupt traffic.

To avoid violence, the independent news agency Beta reported that Zajedno had called on its supporters not to bring firearms into the city and to refrain from the custom of shooting in the air.

The dispute has sparked six weeks of mass demonstrations in Belgrade and other towns from students.

The street protests, which attracted up to a quarter of a million people at their height, remained peaceful until the ruling Socialist party brought thousands of supporters to a counter-rally in Belgrade on Christmas Eve.

The ensuing clashes between rival supporters left one man dead and at least 50 injured. They include one man with a gun shot wound to the head who was reported still to be in a critical condition.

Sarajevo (Reuter) — Bosnian Serbs are holding up the delivery of some 700,000 letters and parcels destined for Serb-controlled territory. Serb leaders, reluctant to recognise the authority of a single Bosnian state, refuse to accept the mail which has piled up at Sarajevo's main post office over the past year.



Human shield: Cecilia Velazquez, a bank manager, being held by a robber during a six-hour stand-off with police in a district of Mexico City on Monday. Outside, a policeman swung open the door of a getaway car and shot dead one of the robbers when he attempted to escape the scene with two hostages

The ruling party is pulling out all the stops in an election it has no chance of losing, writes Stephen Vines

Singapore tries to induce feelgood factor

I am not sure which editions of British newspapers are delivered to Singapore but we have it on the authority of Lee Kuan Yew, the country's elder statesman, that the entire British press is supporting JB Jeyaretnam, the leader of the opposition Workers' Party, in tomorrow's general election.

Mr Lee was speaking in the heat of an election campaign and strange things tend to get said at these times, never stranger than the remarks uttered by God Chok Tong, Mr Lee's successor as Prime Minister.

Yet, even in his exalted position, Mr Goh, who has problems bringing his sentences to an end, worries about becoming "a much smaller man". This is a problem because Mr Goh is unusually tall and fears being cut down in size if one Tang Liang Hong of the Workers' Party gains a seat in parliament. Should that happen Mr Goh says, "my word in future will have less weight both internationally as well as in Singapore".

The ruling People's Action Party (PAP) accuses Mr Tang of Chinese chauvinism because of alleged remarks questioning the predominance of English

language educated cabinet members over their Chinese-educated colleagues.

In the past few days there has been a sudden absence of parking tickets on unlawfully parked cars. This is unusual in law enforcement-obsessed Singapore. Meanwhile, citizens are getting a barrage of letters confirming subsidy payments, waiving land taxes and generally offering all sorts of good news, again, remarkably, in the few days before polling. But electors have also been threatened with the withdrawal of government services if they voted for the opposition.

Surely the PAP cannot be trying to induce a feelgood factor? This suspicion may well be the genesis of one of the many jokes doing the rounds: "How many Singaporeans does it take to change a light bulb?" — Answer:

none, because there is no need. According to the PAP, Singapore is getting brighter all the time.

Not, however bright enough to deter Singaporeans from turning out at opposition rallies in their tens of thousands. Bearing in mind that there will be only 765,332 voters in this election (like many things in Singapore, voting is compulsory) these numbers are very large indeed.

Despite the massive turnout the opposition rallies have become largely phantom events. Tight camera work by the television news broadcasters gives the impression of sparse attendance. In reality, not only do the size of the crowds dwarf those attending PAP rallies but their enthusiasm is amazing.

This enthusiasm is unlikely to be translated into an avalanche of opposition parliamentary seats. Even if they win half the

popular vote, they will not get more than 14 seats in the 81-seat legislature.

A glance at the map of electoral boundaries gives some idea of the creativity the PAP has shown in preparing for the election which it has no chance of losing. One constituency meanders so ingeniously around the island that it defies the laws of geography but makes perfect

sense in the way that it carves up centres of opposition support. Other boundaries have strange channels in their midst.

The real danger of the Singapore election is that it will become a model for other governments attached to the legal niceties of elections but unhappy with the unpredictability of what is sometimes known as "the free vote".



significant shorts

Rebels in Peru renew call to free comrades

Rebels who stormed the Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima, Peru last month and took hundreds of people hostage denied they were terrorists and renewed demands that their jailed comrades be freed.

"What we have is terrorism of state, where thousands of children are killed by starvation," said the rebel from inside the compound. He urged reporters to go to prisons where rebel prisoners are held, saying conditions there were equal to a death sentence.

The Peruvian President, Alberto Fujimori, said he would consider granting safe passage out of the country to rebels holding hostages in the Japanese ambassador's house if they release the captives and lay down their weapons.

AP — Lima

Deng in hospital

China's paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping, was hospitalised for emergency treatment last week. Hong Kong's *Sing Tao Daily* newspaper reported on Tuesday. The report, quoting Peking sources, did not say what the 92-year-old patriarch was treated for, or when. AP — Hong Kong

Court backs mother's visits

A British woman embroiled in a child custody battle with her estranged Malaysian husband obtained a court order that permits her to visit her son without interference from the father, Jane Brumfitt, also known by her Muslim name of Aishah Jane Abdullah, alleged that Ismail Arifin physically abused her recently when she visited their 21-month-old son, Sunni Sazali. Reuter — Kuala Lumpur

Diplomats avoid charges

An official from Belarus arrested for punching a police officer in the face and a Russian accused of trying to start his car while drunk were freed after New York police learned they were diplomats, police said. AP — New York

China gains from BSE fear

Fears over Britain's mad cow disease have sent Chinese beef exports soaring as Hong Kong and South-east Asian markets search for alternative sources of supply. The *China Daily* said: "Beef exports were up 43 per cent compared with the same period of 1995. Reuter — Peking

Fresco thief caught in act

German tourist Manfred Lehmann, 66, was arrested using a hammer to break free frescoes from the ancient city of Ephesus in Turkey. He was released pending trial on charges of attempting to smuggle out ancient artefacts. AP — Selcuk, Turkey



An audience with the Waltz King

It's that time of the year when everything in the world seems to be swinging in three-four time. As the Vienna Philharmonic prepares to give its traditional New Year's Day Concert of waltzes, polkas and marches, the late Johann Strauss grants Piers Burton-Page an exclusive interview

The house out in the Leopoldstadt, not far from the Prater, is replete with imperial solidity. The varnish on the dark wooden floors gleams brilliantly, the furniture is large and heavy, the hangings and drapes all velvet and plush. Ignoring the brash of McDonald's nearby, I ring the bell and am shown into the music room. He is already there; full head of hair slightly greying, self-consciously handsome, smoking a cigar, slightly nervous. In fact, well-preserved after all these years.

There are three basic questions one has to ask Johann the Younger, as he hates to be called. In order: Wine? Women? Song?

It is not a good start. "As any Viennese will tell you, there is nothing wrong with the good life. Why are you British always so puritanical?" But the three wives? "Jetty's death was a catastrophe. Angelica was simply...unfaithful. And Adele is my muse." Oh cue, Frau Strauss brings coffee – Blue Mountain, if not Blue Danube. She is evidently much younger than her husband, evidently worships him, and is evidently Jewish. Some bulk have to be taken.

"Yes, we met in the middle. I was a Catholic. She was a Jew. Now we are both Protestants. And not Austrians either; for the difficulties to be overcome we both had to become citizens of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha." So we fall to talking about Austria, and the

Austrians. Would he call himself a patriot? "Hardly." And then silence. The tangled web of Habsburg politics has even the Straussens enmeshed. But the question will not go away. "I was Imperial Court Music Director, *kaiserlich und königlich* – my loyalties are clear." I gently remind Herr Strauss that it was not always so.

"1848, you mean? An aberration! Youth must needs have dalliance – it was a means of getting back at my illustrious father, also Johann, also musician. We were on opposite sides. But enough said. Politics! Art and politics shouldn't mix, ever!" The famous Strauss brow furrows.

"I know what happened in this city after I died. I know about the wars. I know about Hitler. I know about anti-Semitism. I know that Austrian complicity is not exorcised even yet – as 1996 slides uneasily into 1997, and the memory of Dolfuss and Schuschnigg and Waldeheim is still strong. I have Jewish blood in me; the Nazis forged my grandfather's marriage certificate to hide the fact. Nothing can surprise me any more. But it wasn't all Roses from the South in my day, either..." At this point, though, Adele steps lily a firm but gentle hand on her husband's shoulder. His reddening visage slowly lightens. He stares distantly out of the window and hums, waiting for the next question. *The Perpetuum Mobile*, is it?

Immortality seems a suitable topic. Beethoven! Brahms! Bruckner! Surely a

composer of such fluency as Johann Strauss, with such a tenacious grasp of music's fundamentals and appeal, would have wanted to enter the Pantheon alongside the immortals?

"Self-expression is best left to those with an inflated idea of the Self! I know my limitations – except when I don't know them. Besides, surely you know that I had designs on the opera house. Unfortunately, my operas turned out to be operettas. At the end I was even diversifying into ballet. *Aschenbrödel* – Cinderella to you – practically killed me."

But the three Bs? "Bruckner worshipped me. I'm told. Even though he was a man for the *Ländler* rather than the waltz. That's an Upper Austrian dance, three-four again, slower, statelier – very Brucknerian. Originally they danced it with booted boots on. And they yodelled as well, sometimes. Very Brucknerian again! Well, he was basically a peasant, wasn't he?" The suspicion of a leek curling above the Strauss moustache is not a pleasant sight.

"Brahms was a different matter. He worshipped me, too. But we were friends. He came regularly to my villa in Bad Ischl to the Salzkammergut. In fact, there's a photograph of us there together. Fetch it please, Adele." And sure enough, there they are: on the veranda, formally dressed, the mountains in the background, the one tall and unabashed next to the heavy,

corpulent and very hairy composer of the *Liebesleider Waltzes* but also of the German Requiem.

"He died only a year or two before I did. We were very sad. May I tell you a story? My wife had a decorated paper fan for the heat in the Viennese summer. There was a little musical quotation from the *Blue Danube* on it. One day, Brahms saw it and asked permission to add something. And do you know what he wrote? *Leider nicht von Johannes Brahms*." Sadly, not by Johannes Brahms. How touching! But imagine if I'd done that to the German Requiem." A throaty chuckle, followed by a fit of coughing. Maybe the years have taken their toll after all.

How has the Strauss family flag been kept flying all these years, then? "Well, there was a whole army of brothers and cousins for a start. I had to watch Joseph and Eduard like hawks. There was a grandson – I forget his name – and there is even a direct descendant in Vienna today, another Eduard. But he has seen sense and become a lawyer."

So it is technology to the rescue? "I've heard an old record of someone who may be Brahms playing the piano. I was alive long enough to hear talk of cylinders and 78s. Then newspapers, radio and television – I owe them a lot. A shame that copyright only lasts for 70 years after one's death, what with all the new CDs – I have

a huge collection. Did you know, by the way, there's a company with the wonderful name of Marco Polo that announced seven years ago what they record every note I ever wrote? And they have even the *Blue Danube* with chorus, and old Joseph Weyl's terrible verses. They're about to start on my father's work. Personally, I'm hoping soon for a Strauss CD-Rom. And perhaps even my own Web site. Do you think *Hot Java* would be a good name for a new Polka? A bit advanced, perhaps."

And so to that concert, broadcast live from the Musikverein on New Year's Day, with its audience of millions around the world. What does the Waltz King make of what has now become an established ritual? "I'm all in favour, especially of having it on television. And I'm sure this new lad Brian Kay will be every bit as on the ball for the BBC as dear old Richard Baker was. But it's a pretty sprurious tradition, you know. The Philharmonic only started the concert this century for a money-spinning, long after my demise. The Vienna Phil were very iffy about my music in my lifetime – just as they were with dear old Bruckner, to name but one. I blame the critics – Eduard Hanslick, and all his tribe. He wrote a book called *The Beautiful in Music*, but he couldn't recognise it at 100 paces. It was depressing for a while, but the Whirligig of Time and all that. In fact, that would be a good title for a new waltz..."

Indeed. The very titles of the Strauss family waltzes are enough to set the blood racing. Where did they come from? "Aha! Well spotted! Most of them were born out of desperation on press day for the printed programme at the Sperl Rooms or the Sofiensaal. I scoured the newspapers for ideas, or looked at the Vienna street map, or made something up that had no meaning at all. *Trisch-Trisch*, that sort of thing. And, of course, the Danube never was blue, not even then."

At that moment, the mobile phone that has lain unobtrusively alongside the venerable Bösendorfer piano in the Strauss music room springs into full digital life. The Waltz King seizes it with alacrity, gabbles into it for a moment or two in his still incomprehensible Viennese dialect, and is already calling for his camel-haired ankle-length coat. "Forgive me, I must dash. I am talking to America via satellite. Adele will show you out." Outside, I hear the jingle of the harness as the waiting fiacre, blinds down, bears off along the snow-lined Vienna streets the man the Austrians seem to have crowned their new Emperor of Music.

The Vienna Philharmonic's New Year's Day Concert, presented by Brian Kay, is broadcast live on BBC Radio 3 today at 10.15am (with Part 2 also on BBC2 from 11.15am). During the interval, David King plays Bruckner in Piers Burton-Page's "The Linc Version".

A calendar of the Arts in 1997

James Aufenast selects the most promising events of the year ahead. Mark them in your diaries, or miss out



See Brague still lives at the Royal Academy in January



Jack Dee joins the Leicester Comedy Festival in February



Kristin Scott-Thomas appears in 'The English Patient' in March



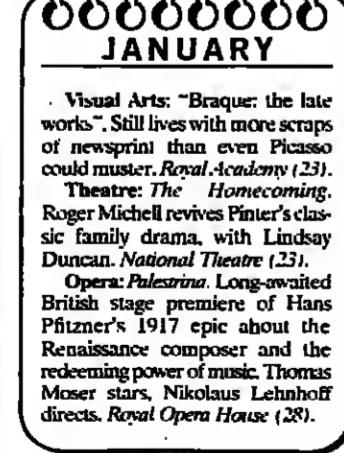
Rachel Whiteread exhibits at the Hayward Gallery in April



Pianist Alfred Brendel plays at the Edinburgh Festival in August



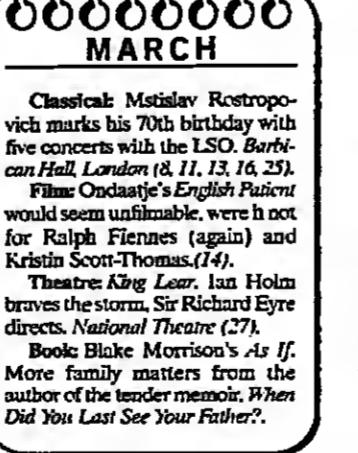
A week of Schubert in November at the Royal Festival Hall



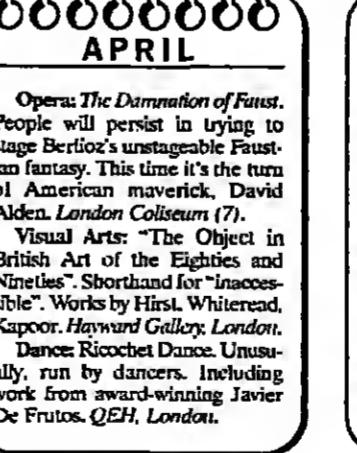
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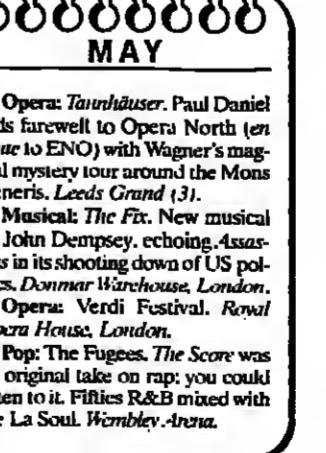
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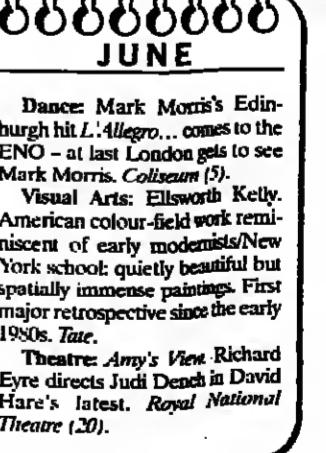
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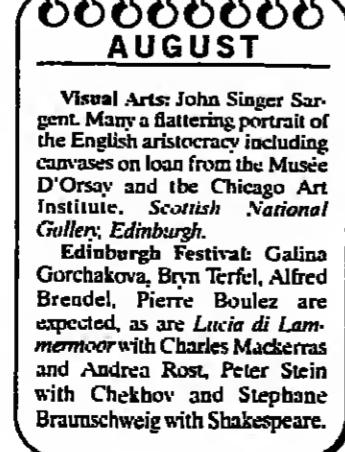
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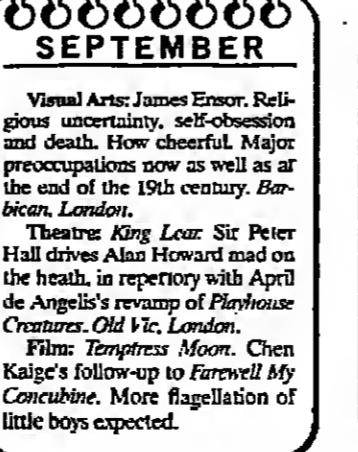
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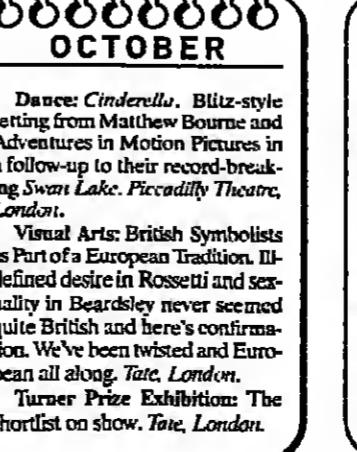
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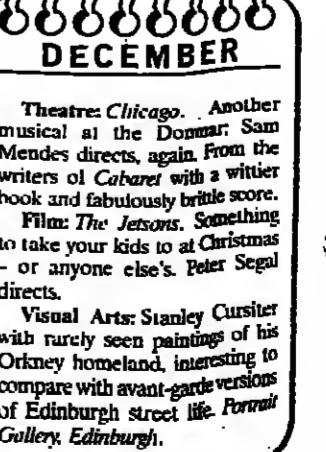
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NOVEMBER



DECEMBER

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Small screen, big star

Never mind Baywatch, never mind the tattooed, soon-to-be-ex-husband. Given the right script, Pamela Anderson could still be a Monroe for our age. By Emma Forrest

ANNUS HORRIBILIS, ANNUS MIRABILIS

Last year, *Vanity Fair* suggested that Pamela Anderson, the premier blonde sex-bomb of the Nineties, find her own Arthur Miller. This was after the *Baywatch* actress had sealed her engagement to Motley Crue drummer Tommy Lee with a tattoo of his name on her ring finger, but before they had a baby, Brandon. It was after she had been photographed saying her vows on a Malibu beach, dressed in a white bikini, and before – though not long before – she filed for divorce.

The society magazine advised her to take up with *Saul Bellow*. A nice thought, but one can't help recalling the classic line about the Monroe-Miller marriage: "she was the brains and he was the beauty". If she feels she must now search for cred, a far more suitable literary companion might be *Trainspotting*'s author, Irvine Welsh. Going by the gossip of supermarket tabloids in the United States, at least they share a common interest.

But that's the lovely thing about Pam. She has never wanted to be credible. During her touchingly self-deprecating conversation with Ruby Wax, shown on BBC1 last February, she joked about wanting to play King Lear. Pam knows that she is a star rather than an actress, and women admire her, as they do Sharon Stone, for the obvious joy she feels in being a star: Pam and Sharon look pleased with their achievements, as opposed to your Julia and Winonas, who keep telling us how much they don't want to be there.

Emotionally, her downfall has been an abusive husband who stayed up all night getting out of his mind with his mates while she was trying to get her newborn son to sleep. Before Pam married Tommy, both his ex-girlfriend, Bobbi Brown, and ex-wife,

Heather Locklear, went public about the physical abuse they had suffered while involved with him.

Locklear's life has many lessons for Pamela. Having left Tommy Lee, the *Dynasty* starlet is now the villain on Aaron Spelling's *Melrose Place* and the highest-paid actress in television.

Pamela does have talent – enough to get her by. Although she is no Paul Scofield, she is not supposed to be. Like Monroe, she is a nice little comedy actress, which is how she first made it – playing "the tool box girl" in the sitcom *Home Improvement*. It was a niche, but she traded it in for the scarlet swimsuit of *Baywatch*, which was a return to what she wore on all those covers of *Playboy*. She became as popular a lifeguard as she had been a centrefold and was soon the biggest sex symbol in the world. However, *Baywatch* has now been axed in America, while *Home Improvement* is still one of the highest-rated comedies on American television.

Career-wise, Pamela's problems started when she moved to the big screen. Her debut, *Barb Wire*, was one of the most unwatchable of all cinema turkeys. The black-rubber-and-big-guns bonanza was not even laughably camp because its failure was so predictable: TV queens generally do flounder on celluloid. Shimmering from her success on *Dynasty*, Heather Locklear underwhelmed Hollywood with her role in *Creature from the Black Lagoon* before finding her feet back on the small screen. Farrah Fawcett, the ultimate television princess in *Charlie's Angels*, still insists on trying her luck in risible Disney comedies, and has consequently vanished from sight. Teri Hatcher has been wise in not giving up the day job (*Lois in The New Adventures of Superman*): her film *Two Days in the Valley* was widely panned. The inevitable ascent

from small to big screen just doesn't work. One's good looks don't necessarily translate to celluloid, let alone one's talent.

Pamela Anderson doesn't need the small screen. There is better garbage out there for her to do. There is no reason why she couldn't make her comeback on *Friends*, as Brooke Shields did, or get herself her own Aaron Spelling vehicle. Pamela can no longer be a silent icon. She has already done too much Oprah, Ruby Wax, Jay Leno. And she has lived too much. Even if she never acted again, we would still love her, as we do Liz Taylor, for what she has been through. Regardless of *Baywatch* being dropped, we have no desire to switch off the real drama. She could just settle into that.

Elizabeth Taylor, however, is in her sixties. She did a lot of good work before becoming a staple of gala dinners and talk shows. It is harder for Pamela because, being a blonde, she is replaceable. *Baywatch* produced Gena Lee Nolin and Doung D'Errico, two vastly inferior Pam clones who are, nevertheless, hugely popular. *Playboy* has turned out Jenny McCarthy, another Pam archetype who is making it very big as a host on MTV. Pam must be wondering if she is anything more than "this hair, these lips, that body, those boobs" (which is how Tommy Lee described her).

She can survive without Tommy or the hair, the lips, etc. Her on-off reconciliation with her husband is currently off. If she sticks to her guns, she will consolidate the female support she first won with that charming Ruby Wax interview, and lose those substance abuse rumours for good. And it sounds flippant, but Pamela Anderson, more than any girl I've ever seen, could do with a haircut. Women in transition cut their hair. I think she'd look rather lovely with a Brunette crop.



From centrefold to lifeguard to chat show veteran, Pamela Anderson became the world's foremost sex symbol. But wouldn't that big hair look lovely Brunette and cropped?

Bridget Jones's Diary

1 January-31 December 1996: A summary

Total weight lost: 5st 2lb (19kg)
Total weight gained: 5st 3lb
Alcohol units: 3,836
Cigarettes: 5,277
Calories: 11,090,265 (bad)
Correct lottery numbers: 42 (vg)
Incorrect lottery numbers: 587 (sort of thing that could happen to anyone)
Total instant purchases: 98
Total instant wins: £101
Total instant profit: £3 (Yesss!)
Yesss! Have beaten system while supporting worthwhile causes in manner of benefactor)
1,471 calls: 721 (apprax)
Valentines: 1 (vg)
Christmas cards: 33 (vg)
Positive thoughts: 4 (vg)
Hangover-free days: 4 (vg)
Boyfriends: 1 (vg)
Number of New Year's Resolutions kept: 0
A quite promising year's progress.

Monday 30 December
Flying home from lovely skiing holiday. Cannot believe quantity of food have consumed over festive period. Wonder how much weight it is technically possible to put on in one day? If you ate the most fattening things you could think of without being sick or stopping, how long would it take the fat to grow, and how much could be produced at any one time? Therefore how much could be put on in seven days of same?

Humph. Just asked Mark Darcy, who said I had to shut up or will tell an hostess to put me in jump seat.

Anyway, life is going to be completely different when get back. Am not going to smoke or drink and am going to be much more on top of things with Mum. For example am going to tell her Mark Darcy, and I cannot come to him and Geoffrey Alceby's New Year's Day Turkey Curry Buffet in poised and adult manner. Also am going to really take pleasure from just being at home putting photographs in albums instead of going out to 192 all the time.

Noon Back In flat. Aargh.

Terified re ringing Mum. Last year Mum, Una and Elaine Darcy spent entire time at the Buffet trying to get me and



Mark Darcy off with each other. Mark Darcy says reappearing as successfully-mated offspring would be not only intolerable (as we would be like pair of performing seals forced to have sex in front of assembled company etc), but irresponsible since Mum would spontaneously burst like Oscar Wilde with smugness then die, which would detract from festive atmosphere.

12.30 Just called Mum. "Oh hello, darling, how are you?"

She trifled casually, apparently

disbelievingly. It was like in a film when someone has thrown a grenade, everyone is tensed for it to go off, and it doesn't. Had Mum finally seen sense, or gone over the edge?

"Anyway, Marjorie couldn't get hold of this hen through the flap so she went in herself and the door locked shut. Well, when Ray came home he couldn't find her anywhere till he went for the eggs. No, Una's a very evil, evil woman."

"Mum," I said levelly, trying to be like Mark Darcy and responsible, wondering if I should ring an ambulance, "could you bring Dad to the telephone, please?"

"What's going on?" I hissed, when Dad came on the phone. "Oh God," he moaned, quietly.

"What? What?"

"It's Mum and Una. It's *Apocalypse Now*. They both turned up on Christmas Day in the same purple paisley Jaeger

being in singleton flat all on own. Was so lovely being away in chalet with all people around all the time (even if Yuppie-Sloane Ranger-style lawyers). Dread thought of getting up in morning with no one to fool around with; no using fact that everyone keeps getting into the bathroom before you as excuse for not getting dressed or washed for hours and hours, sitting at kitchen table gossiping. Wish lived in commune with all chums there would never be alone and could muck about having fun all day.

1.45pm Hmm. Maybe will have a little drink to calm nerves. No. Will go round to Tom's and give him Eric Cantona calendar Christmas present (a amusing-style gift as Tom loves Eric Cantona.) Ooh goody, telephone.

1.50pm Was Tom, complaining that all he has been given for Christmas is five copies of the Eric Cantona calendar. Oh God. Am going to ring Jude and Shazzer and see if they want to come to 192.

4pm Arggh eshrubby goofun seeinggirsgagam. Maybe havellile sleepy now. Oops. 7 o'clock am? pm? Aargh, aargh, Mark Darcy is talking on Ansafone. Oh God. Is 7 in morning. Have slept through New Year's Eve and missed Mark Darcy date. Is pitch black. Help. Cannot find telephone.

7.30pm Even when all seems darkness is light at end of tunnel. Was not the morning but evening, therefore still time to sober up and go out with Mark Darcy. Also, Jude and Shazzer had marvellous news. Apparently new pill has been invented in America whereby all fat is quickly sent, instead of to fat areas, to colon and converted immediately into poo. Apparently wonder pill will be available here in one month only. Hurrah. We can all look forward to New Year eating exactly what want with perfect figures. All need now is further pills for alcohol units and cigarettes converting hangovers, liver-failure and tar.

1.20pm Mmm. Cigarette is delicious. Now, where's the photograph album?

1.30pm Is no good. Hate the upholsh of it. I have to go to Mum and Dad's all day tomorrow for New Year's Day all on my own. Oh no.

1pm Wonder what to do now? Oh yes. Better unpack.

1.15pm Hate the thought of the horrible unpacking. Is bad enough coming home to mad mother without having to unpack. Maybe will have cigarette. No. Mustn't smoke.

1.20pm Mmm. Cigarette is delicious. Now, where's the photograph album?

1.30pm Is no good. Hate the upholsh of it.

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Sales guide

FASHION
STARTED YESTERDAY
Shrim Cashmere for 3 weeks, 11 Beauchamp Place, London SW3 (0171-581 1936). Ceruti 1881 Menswear 26 New Bond Street, London W1 (0171-434 2278).

STARTED MONDAY

Austin Reed branches nationwide. Betty Jackson intro mid-January, 311 Brompton Road, London SW3.

Biba for 4 weeks, 15 Shorts Gardens, London WC2 (0171-240 0641).

Burton for 4 weeks, West 1 Shopping Centre, 379 Oxford Street, London W1, and all stores nationwide (0171-287 9900).

Cashmere Studio 10 Sloane Street, London SW1 (0171-245 9111).

Ceruti 1881 women'swear until 31 Dec, 106 New Bond Street, London W1 (0171-495 5880).

Circa pearls until 31 Jan, 613 Brompton Road, London SW3 (0171-389 3584).

Designworks for 3 weeks, 19 Avery Row, London W1 (0171-240 0641).

DKNY Bond Street, London W1.

Dorothy Perkins West 1 Store, 379 Oxford Street, London W1, and branches nationwide.

Emporio Armani 191 Brompton Road, London SW3 (0171-823 6115) and across London. Sales in Manchester and Glasgow start today.

Elan Nationwide (0171-245 9111).

Gap 223 Sloane Street, London SW1 (0171-245 6221).

Hobbs branches nationwide.

Ken Lane until 31 Jan, 31 Burlington Arcade, London SW1 (0171-499 136) and 38 Beauchamp Place, SW3 (0171-584 1951).

Monsoon 23 The Market, London WC2, and stores nationwide.

Next Nationwide (0171-245 9111).

Oasis until end of January, 292 Regent Street, London W1, and branches nationwide.

Red or 223 Sloane Street, London SW1.

The Scotch House for 2 weeks, 2 Brompton Road, London SW1 and stores across London.

Simpsons until 25 Jan, Piccadilly, London. Extra 10 per cent off today (offer excludes concessions).

ALREADY ON

Ghost, Kate Jones, Claudia Schiffer, Blazer (Moss Bros Group), Racing Green, Ronit Zilberman.

HOMES AND INTERIORS

Magis stores nationwide.

Ikies 223 West 1 Street, London SW1.

Red or 223 Sloane Street, London SW1.

The Scotch House for 2 weeks, 2 Brompton Road, London SW1 and stores across London.

DEPARTMENT STORES

STARTED YESTERDAY

Fortnum and Mason 181 Piccadilly, London W1 (0171-734 0401).

STARTED MONDAY

Debenhams (0171-408 4443).

Farmers 191-193 New Bond Street, London W1 (0171-636 1666) and stores in London and Guildford.

Harvey Nichols Knightsbridge, London SW1 and in Leeds.

Liberty Regent Street, London W1.

Selfridges for about a month, Oxford Street, London W1.

ALREADY ON

British Home Stores nationwide.

SHOES

STARTED MONDAY

John Boatman 191-193 New Bond Street, London W1 (0171-636 1666) and all branches in London, Manchester, Glasgow, Brighton, Brent Cross and Lakeside Shopping Centre (details 0171-499 0204).

ALREADY ON

Church's, Ravel

HOMES & INTERIORS

STARTED MONDAY

Heals until 19 Jan, 196 Tottenham Court Road, London W1 (0171-636 1666) and stores in London and Guildford.

The Pier Stores around the country, including King's Road, London SW3.

Royal Worcester Spode 126 Regent St, London W1.

Anti-abortionists' conception of a baby lacks conviction

What would you do if you found one of the candidates standing in your constituency was a member of the Herod Tendency? The Herods snatch babies from their buggies if they suspect the mother is inadequate/ a drain on the state/ likely to rear criminals or where the child is seriously disabled. The Herods seize these misfits and run them through a sword in full public view.

They do this with absolute impunity because in our savage society we have passed a law saying they can, a law supported by a majority of MPs and an overwhelming majority (80 per cent) of the voters. We live, it seems, in a society far wicked than the Third Reich where the Holocaust at least pretended to be secret from the people, or Rome, with its grizzly Colosseum games where many enemies died but not little Roman citizens.

That is what the Roman Catholic Church, the evangelicals, the fundamentalist Muslims and Jews all protest to think of our abortion laws. Innocent "unborn children" – 170,000 last year – are put to death. An embryo, from the moment of conception, is, they say, the very same as a child. That is what the Catholic Cardinals Hulme and Winning have been going on about.

But if they really REALLY believe it, why has the wickedness of abortion not driven them mad? Why are they so passive and moderate about it? Cardinal Hulme, when asked, politely said he thought abortion "a great evil in our society and really unworthy of a civilised society". Modest words, in the circumstances. Cardinal Winning said Scottish Labour's refusal to allow a pro-Lifers stall at its conference was "almost fascist". Even that seems inadequate outrage.

Would we all stand by as passively, with just a few caustic words, if we thought innocent children were being butchered in their thousands? I hope not. We would mount a revolution, we would storm the barricades, hurl ourselves upon Parliament. For this reason, I have always had sympathy with the American extremists who picket abortion clinics. If you think children are being killed, it makes sense.

But the pro-Lifers seem to take this modern massacre of the innocents rather well (just as the Vatican took the Holocaust rather well, which maybe why the present Pope compared the two a few years ago). Why? Because, of course, they don't REALLY believe a blob of an embryo is the same as a baby in a tummy. Like a great many absurd things the religious claim to believe, they plainly don't actually. They play at belief. After all, if the people of the Middle Ages really thought a Hieronymus Bosch hell gaped at their feet, they would have been good. The religious only believe with a little bit of their mind, while common sense rules most of their brains.

Instead of rebellion, the Life lobby is mounting some 50 well-behaved candidates to oppose pro-abortion MPs. Instead of barricading themselves inside their cathedrals the Catholic bishops are lobbing snowballs at the Labour Party. In this empty silly season when there is nothing else to fill the Today programme, Why do the media love abortion? Why not the flat-earthers, the anti-fluoridisers of the water supply or the Esperantists? For abortion is not an issue. It is a dead parrot, going nowhere. Ceased to be, expired and gone to meet its



Polly Toynbee
Pro-lifers seem to take this modern massacre of the innocents rather too well – they don't really believe a blob of embryo is the same as a baby

less, desperate cases, the 14-year-olds who have no idea what is happening to them, the very stupid and the mentally retarded: all the people who would make the worst mothers. And if soon foetuses can be kept alive at any stage, will we have abortion altogether?

But the Conservatives could not be that foolish after Senator Dole's experience. Clinton's strongest pitch in winning the crucial women's vote was his veto of a bill to outlaw late-term abortions. Dole's flirtation with the pro-Lifers was the biggest of his many milestones. Few can imagine Major making that mistake. All the British polling evidence suggests even anti-abortionists do not switch votes against a pro-abortion candidate of their own party.

The issue, together with contraception, is even sinking the Catholic Church, now in urgent need of a progressive Pope to rescind the 1968 encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. Claire Short says the church has lost her generation of women. The National Abortion Campaign points to a poll now nearly 10 years old which shows that even then nearly a third of British Catholics supported abortion, twice as many as those who were strongly against.

But so what? From a population of 58m, only some 7m practice any religion and most of them are moderate, so why should politicians worry? Religions are just one minority among myriads, though they get airtime out of all proportion to their numbers.

Here they are a relatively minor menace but the Catholic Church's stance on these matters continues to cause untold suffering round the world. There might be more sympathy if the Pope took into the Vatican all the unwanted street children of Catholic Brazil, born as a direct result of Catholic teaching. Or if the pro-Lifers were as active about the massacres of those children as they are in defence of British foetuses.

maker, rung down the curtain and joined the choir invisible. This is an ex-issue.

No doubt Labour and Tony Blair feel aggrieved. Why keep picking on them when all the parties firmly hold the line that MPs have a free vote. True, Blair foolishly made himself vulnerable by trying to have it both ways. He voted for abortion and reaffirmed Labour MPs' right to a free vote but then he tried to suck up to the anti-abortionists by adding that he personally was actually against it. What? And then voted FOR it? Either abortion is murder or it isn't. He said individual people should make their own choices. To murder? Surely not. So he deserved a hit of a kicking from the cardinals.

Yesterday Cardinal Winning claimed that Labour anti-abortionists are put under intolerable pressure to keep their views quiet. John Reid, Labour Scottish Catholic MP, replied tartly that the most pressure he had come under was from organised write-ins by pro-Lifers.

A small frisson of unease swept through the pro-abortion lobbies yesterday. Was it possible, as a last desperate gesture, clutching at straws, that the Tories might come out for a tightening of the abortion law? After all, it can be made to seem quite reasonable. As modern technology keeps foetuses alive at an earlier and earlier stage, so the legal date for abortion needs to be made earlier too.

It is an argument to be strenuously resisted. Who needs late abortions? The most hope-

less, desperate cases, the 14-year-olds who have no idea what is happening to them, the very stupid and the mentally retarded: all the people who would make the worst mothers. And if soon foetuses can be kept alive at any stage, will we have abortion altogether?

In fact, murder in the Sharia is a personal crime; the state is bound to respect the wishes of the victim's family. Each year in Saudi Arabia, many killers are pardoned by the families of the victims, but this is hardly noted by the Western media interested only in the number of executions. All students of Islam know that the Koran did not introduce the principle of retribution, but merely reaffirmed what the Old Testament said.

What the Koran did introduce was the concept of pardon. The Koran gives relatives of a murder victim the absolute right to insist on a "life for a life". Yet the Koran heaps praise on those who forgive and pardon. All this does not sit well with the common media image of a "brutal" Sharia and it is consistently ignored.

Capital punishment is not the only aspect of Sharia that is not understood because it is never intelligently discussed in the Western media. There are numerous other examples. According to the Sharia, a wife, in the marriage contract, can retain the right to divorce and can specify the financial settlement when a divorce occurs. This is perhaps more advanced

The Sharia, the Muslim code of law, is a complex system of jurisprudence that does not interest the Western man in the street (oops, man and woman!). Understandably, therefore, the Western media does not pay it more than a passing, disparaging nod. Yet when a *cause célèbre* involving Muslims explodes, one finds a sudden interest in the Sharia.

This week, Debbie Parry and Lucille McLaughlin, two British nurses in Saudi Arabia, were charged with the murder of an Australian colleague, Yvonne Gilford. Judging from the reaction of the British media, one would think the incident was one of the most significant developments of the fading year. Of course, it was not. But all the elements of a *cause célèbre* are here: "holy men" sitting in grim judgment; helpless women in "rat-infested" holes, and the grand finale, a public beheading.

One has the sickening feeling that some writers wanted the episode to end in a prophecy-fulfilling itself beheading. With the media, it is the story that counts. The human suffering triggered by the story is dismissed in the same way that military commanders dismiss the loss of innocent civilian lives in an air raid as "collateral damage".

Among the sensational reports, bits and pieces of the real Sharia inadvertently emerged. Readers learnt that it was up to a victim's family to insist on retribution or pardon. No one stopped to ponder this rather strange legal phenomenon, handing the power of life and death to the relatives of the victim.

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by Ghazi A Algosaibi



Lucille McLaughlin (left) is charged with the murder of Yvonne Gilford in Saudi Arabia

The Koran did not introduce the principle of retribution, but merely reaffirmed what the Old Testament said

than systems that leave such decisions to divorce lawyers and divorce courts.

I have never seen a reference to this right of Muslim women in the Western media. I suspect it is ignored because it contradicts the "bash-the-women" concept of Islam.

Another example has to do with "hand-chopping". Nobody in the media bothers to point out that this punishment is applied only in very specific kinds of theft under most stringent conditions. No one, for example, would lose his hand for embezzlement, forgery, stealing public money, or helping himself to items not properly protected.

During times of famine, the second Caliph, Omar, suspended this punishment altogether. Many modern Muslim scholars argue that unless a Muslim state introduces a comprehensive welfare system, it has no business applying this punishment.

Adultery is also presented in a most misleading way. According to the Sharia, adultery cannot be established unless four witnesses convince the court

that they saw with their own eyes "the whole thing". During the early period of Islam, a man appeared in front of a judge to testify in an adultery case. He told the judge that he saw the man on top of the woman, saw the movements, and heard the grunts. The judge asked if he saw "actual entry". The witness grumbled that he would have to be a part of the woman's vagina to witness such an occurrence. Despite the grumbling, the accused were set free and the man was lashed for bearing false testimony. As some acute observers noted, this stringent requirement makes adultery a crime only if practised on an orgy.

My central point is that tensions between Islam and the West have little to do with theology and very much with politics. Western propagandists denounce Islam for not respecting the Western human rights code, circa 1997; Muslim apologists counter by saying that Islam introduced most of these rights 14 centuries ago, thus making them "divine" rights, which no one can take away.

Western spokesmen criticise "barbaric" punishments, while Muslim advocates point out that no Muslim society would allow tens of thousands to sleep homeless in the streets.

The conflict between Islam and the West is political. This requires some explanation. During the past five centuries, the West's political experience led to the common belief that no progress could be achieved as long as religion, embodied in the Church, dominated public affairs. Thus, there was a steady movement away from religion towards secularisation. The contemporary Western thinker is a by-product of the political

The writer is Saudi Arabia's ambassador in London.

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business & city

Business news desk: tel 0171-293 2638 fax 0171-293 2098
BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

Markets and pound end year on high note

Magnus Grimond

Markets ended the year on a high note yesterday, with the pound reaching levels not seen since Black Wednesday four years ago and the FTSE 100 index of leading shares edging up to another record close. The Footsie ended 2.8 points ahead for a 4,118.5, giving a gain for the year of 11.6 per cent.

In thin trading, sterling broke through the psychologically important \$1.70 barrier to settle nearly two cents up at \$1.71, a rate not seen since September 1992 after the UK was forced out of the European Monetary System. It was a similar story against the German mark, with the pound's half-pfenning rise to 2.6365 taking it above previous

peaks reached over the last four years.

Analysts said the currency was being driven by hopes of a further interest rate rise in January. Expectations that money

rates could go up later this month were fuelled by further signs of the continuing pick-up in the UK economy, with strong mortgage lending figures for November and what was described as "pretty robust" money supply data for the week before Christmas.

The British Bankers' Association said approvals for new lending had dipped by 6 per cent between October and November, half the rate recorded in the same period of last year. Meanwhile, gross lending actually made in the month at £2.67bn was fractionally ahead of the already strong figure for October.

Analysts said foreign currency investors were being drawn to the UK as one of the only countries around the world

where the trend in money costs is upwards. But they warned that the limited trading meant too much should not be read into the year-end exuberance.

Chris Turner of Barclays de Zoete Wedd said: "It is a very thin market and there is not much trading going on. Really it is just a continuation of what we have seen over the past week or so as people look forward to a rate rise early in the new year."

The recent weakness of the yen was a contributory factor, he said. Japanese investors were increasingly looking for higher returns outside Japan, according to Mr Turner, with the UK the only major country where an imminent rate rise is expected.

Robert Prior of HSBC Janes Capel said there was nothing

particularly new yesterday, although the strong M0 and lending figures lent support to the interest rate story. Most people were discounting a rise in January, possibly after the next meeting between Bank of England Governor Eddie George and the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, on 15 January.

Equities shrugged aside the

possible impact of a stronger

pound on overseas earnings to

notch up its fifth closing high of December. The near-12 per cent gain defied many sceptics at the beginning of 1996 who suggested the market would be largely unchanged during the year. But the near-12 per cent gain was well below the 20 per cent recorded the previous year and came nowhere near the

record 35 per cent performance of 1989. And with only 203 million shares traded in a truncated half-day session which missed an early morning fall on Wall Street, the few dealers at their desks warned yesterday that the strong showing should not necessarily be taken as a pointer to next year's performance.

Robert Buckland of HSBC

James Capel described the market as "very dull", with no real

change in direction. "It is very difficult to find any signal or lead. There are not loads of

fund managers saying, 'This stock is very cheap' and others

saying, 'No they're not, have mine'." He is forecasting only a modest increase in the main index to 4,400 for this year.

Technical factors played their

part in yesterday's rise, which

came on the back of the expiry

of so-called FTSE 100 index

"flex options", which are dealt

in over the counter.

The last set of economic statistics from the old year added to the warm sentiment yesterday. The 6 per cent fall in the number of new mortgages approved left a total of 40,259 for November, worth £2.358m, but this was only half the seasonal fall recorded in November 1995. "This points to a general and sustainable strengthening of the whole market," according to Tim Sweeney the director-general of the BBA.

The BBA includes eight of the 20 biggest mortgage lenders and the complete mortgage figures due on Friday are expected to show that level of mortgage lending has accelerated steadily since April 1996 and is now running almost 5 per cent higher than a year ago.

BA poised to offer Heathrow landing slots – at a price

Michael Harrison

British Airways is set to accept the conditions imposed by the Office of Fair Trading on its alliance with American Airlines by offering take-off and landing slots at Heathrow to rival carriers.

However, BA will insist that it should be allowed to sell the slots rather than being forced to surrender them without any financial gain.

The airline's formal response to the OFT is due to be submitted early next week ahead of the 10 January deadline set down for replies. Other carriers, notably United Airlines and Richard Branson's Virgin Atlantic, will argue strongly that the OFT's conditions do not go far enough, allowing BA to strengthen still further its dominance at Heathrow.

Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, announced last month that he would not refer the tie-up to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission provided BA and AA released 168 slots a week to other airlines wanting to operate transatlantic services.

Initial estimates suggest the slots could fetch up to £180m. A BA spokesman said: "We don't see any justification for simply relinquishing these slots. No other transatlantic alliance has been asked to do so and they have a far greater share of slots at their hub air-

ports than we do. Lufthansa, for instance, controls 60 per cent of slots at Frankfurt. If we have to release slots we will look for suitable payment from whoever takes them over."

The European Commission is due to publish guidelines shortly on how airport slots might be freely traded. However, there appears to be a split

application for approval would be submitted to the two government agencies early in the new year. The aim is to begin operating the alliance formally in the spring.

Separately, BA sources pored over reports from Taiwan that it was preparing to pay £120m for a 16 per cent stake in China Airlines.

According to local newspaper reports in Taipei, BA has shown a keen interest in acquiring a stake from the China Aviation Development Foundation, which owns 82 per cent of the airline.

A BA spokesman in London said it was not the company's policy to comment on rumours and speculation about possible alliances or investments. But other aviation sources said there was not a lot in the reports from Taiwan.

The Hong Kong-based investment bank Wheelock NatWest has been commissioned to advise on the share sale and is thought to have approached a number of European airlines. But no serious discussions have taken place and the deal to bring foreign investment into China Airlines is not expected to be concluded until later in 1997.

BA's existing alliances are with Qantas, Deutsche BA, TAT and Air Liberté, which it took formal control of on Monday. BA has made no secret of its desire to find a partner in the Pacific Rim.

A spokesman said that in reaction to its existing smoking ban, BA had been overwhelmed by

in Brussels over the desirability of slot trading with the Transport Commissioner, Neil Kinnock, supporting the move and the Competition Commissioner, Karel Van Miert, being less enthusiastic.

In tandem with UK government approval for the alliance, BA and AA are about to seek clearance from the US Justice Department and US Department of Transportation. The BA spokesman said a formal

application for approval would be submitted to the two government agencies early in the new year. The aim is to begin operating the alliance formally in the spring.

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A BA spokesman in London said it was not the company's policy to comment on rumours and speculation about possible alliances or investments. But other aviation sources said there was not a lot in the reports from Taiwan.

The Hong Kong-based investment bank

Wheelock NatWest has been com-

misioned to advise on the share

sale and is thought to have

approached a number of European

airlines. But no serious

discussions have taken place

and the deal to bring foreign

investment into China Airlines

is not expected to be concluded

until later in 1997.

BA's existing alliances are with

Qantas, Deutsche BA, TAT and

Air Liberté, which it took formal

control of on Monday. BA has

made no secret of its desire to

find a partner in the Pacific Rim.

A spokesman said that in reaction to its existing smoking ban, BA had been overwhelmed by

in Brussels over the desirability of slot trading with the Transport Commissioner, Neil Kinnock, supporting the move and the Competition Commissioner, Karel Van Miert, being less enthusiastic.

In tandem with UK government

approval for the alliance, BA and AA are about to seek

clearance from the US Justice

Department and US Department of Transportation. The BA spokesman said a formal

application for approval would be submitted to the two government agencies early in the new year. The aim is to begin operating the alliance formally in the spring.

Separately, BA sources pored over reports from Taiwan that it was preparing to pay £120m for a 16 per cent stake in China Airlines.

According to local newspaper

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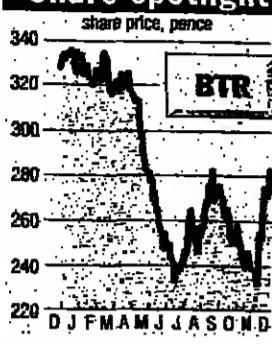
Q

market report / shares

Data Bank

FTSE 100	4118.5	+2.8
FTSE 250	4490.5	+5.6
FTSE 350	2043.8	+1.6
SEAO VOLUME	203m shares,	
	17,902 bargains	
Gilts Index	n/a	

Share spotlight



BTR revival continues as Footsie splutters to new high

Has BTR's long slide from grace finally ended—or are the shares merely experiencing a dead-bat bounce?

After a torpid run, with the price crashing from 336.5p to 230.5p, the shares have enjoyed a spirited revival and yesterday rose another 3p to 284p.

BTR's comeback started on

grey Friday, the bleak December day when Footsie was

at one time down 168.5 points after chairman Alan Greenspan had warned about

stock markets getting over-

heated.

It was, as blue chips slithered

and slipped, the only Footsie

constituent to score a gain.

Its sudden return to favour

followed a trading statement

which, far from shovelling the

expected doom and gloom in

the direction of shareholders,

carried a modestly upbeat mes-

age.

Chief executive Ian Strachan

clearly has a tough job rein-

venting the sprawling con-

glomerate.

His trading state-

ment was expected to be a

torrid

examination of the

problems

he was encountering.

The market had become so

resigned to BTR remaining in

a state of deep depression

that it was happy to embrace any-

thing sounding remotely pos-

itive.

However, Mr Strachan still

had much to do. A return to the

high-riding days of two years

ago when the shares topped

400p could still be a long way off.

Indeed Société Générale

Strauss-Turnball still

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sport

Dons fear Gradi's history lesson



In Saturday's FA Cup third round
Wimbledon visit Crewe, a side managed
by a man who helped to mould them.

Phil Shaw saw him first

Wimbledon have come a long way since Dario Gradi joined them as a fresh-faced reserve and youth coach nearly two decades ago. In those days they were Fourth Division makeweights, struggling to make ends meet at Plough Lane. Now they are Premiership heavyweights, struggling to make ends meet at Selhurst Park.

In one of his earliest matches on being promoted to manager, 19 years ago this month, Gradi was thankful for a 0-0 draw at Crewe Alexandra before 1,800 souls. The height of the Dons' ambition then was to escape the re-election zone in their first season after graduating from the Southern League. On Saturday, when a full house assembles to see the fixture re-created in the third round of the FA Cup, victory for Gradi's Crewe side would rank as a major giant-killing feat.

For Gradi, now remarkably in his 14th year at Gresty Road and newly contracted until 2007, the chance to pit his principles and prodigies against top-flight opposition who just happen to be his former employers make it the perfect. His only regret that Sam Hammam, the Wimbledon owner, will not be present as Crewe set out to prove that other small fry have also made substantial waves.

"I rang Sam as soon as I heard the draw and he told me he wouldn't be able to come because he'd booked a skiing holiday," Gradi said. "He couldn't cancel it because he's got family coming from all over the world. I said: 'Right, I'm coming with you because I want to see your face when we beat you!'"

The friendship dates back to the late 1970s when Hammam, a Lebanese businessman with interests in London, joined the Wimbledon board. "Sam got bitten by the football bug," recalled Gradi. Whenever he came over from

Saudi we took him with us to matches. We had to explain the off-side rule to him several times, but he had this terrific enthusiasm."

Gradi was already established as manager, having been promoted by Ron Noades, who was chairman in SW19 before moving over to Crystal Palace. Though he plays down his role, the former England amateur international laid the foundations for Wimbledon's extraordinary rise to become championship challengers.

It was during his reign that Dave Bassett, who eventually led them into the former First Division, was elevated from the playing ranks to be assistant manager. "I don't claim the credit for that," Gradi said. "Ron Noades always recognised Dave's ability. I came to see that it would be a good appointment and it worked very well."

The "Crazy Gang" mentality was a reflection of Bassett's personality. Hammam, understanding its value in terms of team spirit, carried it on. "It's not my way," Gradi said. "I said at the time that they'd win the Cup with a set-play, and they did. As for being a force in the Premiership, I don't have to pinch myself because when I was manager and Sam joined the board, we drew up a five-year plan to get to that level."

Yet it was Gradi who effectively launched the gang show by flooding Wally Downes at 17, recruiting Alan Cork from Derby reserves and signing Dave Beasant from Edgware. "He trained with us for a week and he was poor. But Dave Bassett had a feeling for him so we played him in the reserves at Brighton, and I got Mike Kelly, the goalkeeping coach, to go and stand behind the goal. He came back and said 'I'd sign him.' So we did, for £750 plus a set of strip."

Gradi's task was to turn a bunch of rough diamonds into a "proper" League team. "It was an exciting time because we were able to build a new club. They'd gone in thinking they could succeed as part-timers, but they didn't. We had people turning up for training,

at all hours and I couldn't say anything to them because they had their jobs to think about."

"The good ones went full-time and we stuck with one semi-pro, Dave Donaldson. He was an air-traffic controller at Heathrow, aged about 36, and he just used to ask when and where we were playing and say: 'See you there.'

Long before Beasant made history, saving a penalty and lifting the Cup itself as captain in 1988, Gradi had become history at Wimbledon. Following a brief reunion with Noades at Palace, he began his long affair with Crewe.

He is possibly unique in having been "not at all surprised" about either the shock Wimbledon gave Liverpool at Wembley or the way they continue to mock predictions of their demise. "I said at the time that they'd win the Cup with a set-play, and they did. As for being a force in the Premiership, I don't have to pinch myself because when I was manager and Sam joined the board, we drew up a five-year plan to get to that level."

"There is a similarity between us in that they've got the problem we've got: not being able to balance the books, though having said that we don't owe anyone anything at the moment. It's very difficult for Wimbledon to keep competing against clubs like Manchester United or Arsenal who are awash with cash. The only way they can break even is by selling players – exactly like us."

For that reason, as well as for old time's sake, Gradi derives great satisfaction from seeing Wimbledon thriving "from a football point of view, if not commercially". The revenue from satellite television and sponsorship have created the possibility, he fears, of the rich becoming so rich that "no one can stand up to them".

Whatever the reality of their financial situation, Wimbledon will be forced into the unfamiliar role of members of a wealthy élite on Saturday. Their prospects of progress may depend, ironically, on how successfully they summon the spirit which Dario Gradi helped to foster in those far-off days at Plough Lane.



Dario Gradi makes his principles clear to his prodigies at Gresty Road

Photograph: Robert Hallam



Dario Gradi took over as Wimbledon manager in January 1978 and is pictured here with his side in that first season in the Football League

TODAY'S MAJOR FOOTBALL FIXTURES AND POOLS CHECK

Nationwide Football League						
First Division						
9 Barnsley v Oldham	0-0	24 Darlington v Carlisle	1-0	40 Dundee Utd v Aberdeen	1-0	53 Motherwell v Kilmarnock
10 Birmingham v Manchester City	0-0	35 Exeter v Barnet	0-0	41 Dunfermline v Raith	1-0	54 St Mirren v Dundee
11 Bolton v Bradford	0-0	36 Huddersfield v Hull	0-0	42 Hibernian v Hearts	0-0	55 Walsall v Walsall
12 Charlton v Ipswich	0-0	37 Lincoln v Wigan	0-0	43 Motherwell v Kilmarnock	0-0	56 West Brom v Tranmere
13 Crystal Palace v Reading	0-0	38 Mansfield v Fulham	0-0	44 East Rife v Spurri	0-0	57 Wigan v Walsall
14 Huddersfield v Stoke	0-0	39 Northampton v Cardiff	0-0	45 Monkton v St Mirren	0-0	58 Wigan v Walsall
15 Norwich v Portsmouth	0-0	40 Port Vale v Southend	0-0	46 Monkton v St Mirren	0-0	59 Wigan v Walsall
16 Oldham v Grimsby	0-0	41 Rochdale v Hereford	0-0	47 Parachute v Cirencester	0-0	60 Wigan v Walsall
17 Port Vale v Southend	0-0	42 Scarborough v Cambridge Utd	0-0	48 St Mirren v Dundee	0-0	61 Wigan v Walsall
18 Derby v Nottingham Forest	0-0	43 Shrewsbury v Wolves	0-0	49 Swindon v Doncaster	0-0	62 Wigan v Walsall
19 Doncaster v Bury	0-0	44 Salford v Chester	0-0	50 Torquay v Brighton	0-0	63 Wigan v Walsall
20 Grimsby v Walsall	0-0	45 Swindon v Doncaster	0-0	51 Wigan v Bury	0-0	64 Wigan v Walsall
21 Luton v Bury	0-0	46 Wigan v Bury	0-0	52 Wigan v Bury	0-0	65 Wigan v Walsall
22 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	47 Wigan v Bury	0-0	53 Wigan v Bury	0-0	66 Wigan v Walsall
23 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	48 Wigan v Bury	0-0	54 Wigan v Bury	0-0	67 Wigan v Walsall
24 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	49 Wigan v Bury	0-0	55 Wigan v Bury	0-0	68 Wigan v Walsall
25 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	50 Wigan v Bury	0-0	56 Wigan v Bury	0-0	69 Wigan v Walsall
26 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	51 Wigan v Bury	0-0	57 Wigan v Bury	0-0	70 Wigan v Walsall
27 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	52 Wigan v Bury	0-0	58 Wigan v Bury	0-0	71 Wigan v Walsall
28 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	53 Wigan v Bury	0-0	59 Wigan v Bury	0-0	72 Wigan v Walsall
29 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	54 Wigan v Bury	0-0	60 Wigan v Bury	0-0	73 Wigan v Walsall
30 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	55 Wigan v Bury	0-0	61 Wigan v Bury	0-0	74 Wigan v Walsall
31 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	56 Wigan v Bury	0-0	62 Wigan v Bury	0-0	75 Wigan v Walsall
32 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	57 Wigan v Bury	0-0	63 Wigan v Bury	0-0	76 Wigan v Walsall
33 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	58 Wigan v Bury	0-0	64 Wigan v Bury	0-0	77 Wigan v Walsall
34 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	59 Wigan v Bury	0-0	65 Wigan v Bury	0-0	78 Wigan v Walsall
35 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	60 Wigan v Bury	0-0	66 Wigan v Bury	0-0	79 Wigan v Walsall
36 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	61 Wigan v Bury	0-0	67 Wigan v Bury	0-0	80 Wigan v Walsall
37 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	62 Wigan v Bury	0-0	68 Wigan v Bury	0-0	81 Wigan v Walsall
38 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	63 Wigan v Bury	0-0	69 Wigan v Bury	0-0	82 Wigan v Walsall
39 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	64 Wigan v Bury	0-0	70 Wigan v Bury	0-0	83 Wigan v Walsall
40 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	65 Wigan v Bury	0-0	71 Wigan v Bury	0-0	84 Wigan v Walsall
41 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	66 Wigan v Bury	0-0	72 Wigan v Bury	0-0	85 Wigan v Walsall
42 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	67 Wigan v Bury	0-0	73 Wigan v Bury	0-0	86 Wigan v Walsall
43 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	68 Wigan v Bury	0-0	74 Wigan v Bury	0-0	87 Wigan v Walsall
44 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	69 Wigan v Bury	0-0	75 Wigan v Bury	0-0	88 Wigan v Walsall
45 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	70 Wigan v Bury	0-0	76 Wigan v Bury	0-0	89 Wigan v Walsall
46 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	71 Wigan v Bury	0-0	77 Wigan v Bury	0-0	90 Wigan v Walsall
47 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	72 Wigan v Bury	0-0	78 Wigan v Bury	0-0	91 Wigan v Walsall
48 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	73 Wigan v Bury	0-0	79 Wigan v Bury	0-0	92 Wigan v Walsall
49 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	74 Wigan v Bury	0-0	80 Wigan v Bury	0-0	93 Wigan v Walsall
50 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	75 Wigan v Bury	0-0	81 Wigan v Bury	0-0	94 Wigan v Walsall
51 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	76 Wigan v Bury	0-0	82 Wigan v Bury	0-0	95 Wigan v Walsall
52 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	77 Wigan v Bury	0-0	83 Wigan v Bury	0-0	96 Wigan v Walsall
53 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	78 Wigan v Bury	0-0	84 Wigan v Bury	0-0	97 Wigan v Walsall
54 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	79 Wigan v Bury	0-0	85 Wigan v Bury	0-0	98 Wigan v Walsall
55 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	80 Wigan v Bury	0-0	86 Wigan v Bury	0-0	99 Wigan v Walsall
56 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	81 Wigan v Bury	0-0	87 Wigan v Bury	0-0	100 Wigan v Walsall
57 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	82 Wigan v Bury	0-0	88 Wigan v Bury	0-0	101 Wigan v Walsall
58 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	83 Wigan v Bury	0-0	89 Wigan v Bury	0-0	102 Wigan v Walsall
59 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	84 Wigan v Bury	0-0	90 Wigan v Bury	0-0	103 Wigan v Walsall
60 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	85 Wigan v Bury	0-0	91 Wigan v Bury	0-0	104 Wigan v Walsall
61 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	86 Wigan v Bury	0-0	92 Wigan v Bury	0-0	105 Wigan v Walsall
62 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	87 Wigan v Bury	0-0	93 Wigan v Bury	0-0	106 Wigan v Walsall
63 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	88 Wigan v Bury	0-0	94 Wigan v Bury	0-0	107 Wigan v Walsall
64 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	89 Wigan v Bury	0-0	95 Wigan v Bury	0-0	108 Wigan v Walsall
65 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	90 Wigan v Bury	0-0	96 Wigan v Bury	0-0	109 Wigan v Walsall
66 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	91 Wigan v Bury	0-0	97 Wigan v Bury	0-0	110 Wigan v Walsall
67 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	92 Wigan v Bury	0-0	98 Wigan v Bury	0-0	111 Wigan v Walsall
68 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	93 Wigan v Bury	0-0	99 Wigan v Bury	0-0	112 Wigan v Walsall
69 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0	94 Wigan v Bury	0-0	100 Wigan v Bury	0-0	113 Wigan v Walsall
70 Middlesbrough v Bury	0-0					

sport

Manchester United to win the title, Australia to blaze through the Ashes series, no Grand Slam title for Henman, but golf could have a young champion. *Independent* writers look at the year ahead

1997: The shape of things to come

FOOTBALL

Glenn Moore

Another 20 Italians will be heading for these shores in 1997, but most will be seeking points not pounds. After a year dominated by a summer tournament, English football returns to its winter roots, with the two most significant dates in February and October. That is when England meet Italy, home and away, in the quest for a place in the 1998 World Cup.

The February tie, at Wembley, will be Italy's first under new management. Cesare Maldini will need all of his son Paolo's defensive virtues if Italy are to end Glenn Hoddle's impressive start. He will also need good minders off the pitch as the hotel could be overrun by English agents and managers.

An English victory then, and a point or more in Poland. In May, will virtually ensure England finish in the top two. A further point in Italy on 11 October would clinch first place and avoid the trauma of a play-off.

Bizarrely, there will be one other Anglo-Italian meeting, in France in the summer. Brazil will also feature in a pre-World Cup tournament which will be as much a test of security as football.

Scotland's key matches are in April, when they host Austria and visit Sweden. The Irish Republic's fate is likely to be decided in October, when Romania visit Dublin. The North wind up their campaign in Portugal the same night but, by then, the re-

Time to bring on the Italians



Paulo Maldini: Aiming to come to his father's defence

sult may be academic. As for Wales, the big question is whether Bobby Gould will still be in a job by then.

The internationals are important, but they will relegated to the back burner while the Premiership builds up to what could be a third successive last-day finish. Manchester United are looking ominously good and

will be filled. With the refusals piling up, it seems the Football Association may have favourably reconsidered Howard Wilkinson's credentials to be technical director. He may be associated with unimaginative football but, after two years of futile searching, a compromise is required.

It will be equally difficult to find a replacement for Rick Parry as chief executive of the Premier League. With pay-per-view approaching, Parry's calm and even-handed negotiating will be missed.

So, too, will his concept of a game beyond the Premier League. While the big clubs look to more television loot, the likes of Brighton and Darlington are merely seeking to survive. Not for them the share issues of the fat cats. Nor will they be on Roberto Baggio's viewing list as he ponders a move from Serie A.

The year will end with the World Cup draw – what price England to be paired with Terry Venables' Australia?

Predictions (in descending order of probability): Champions: Manchester United. England and Scotland to qualify for the World Cup. Liverpool to win European Cup-Winners' Cup. Kidderminster to replace Darlington. Revanelli to join Manchester United. Kinnear to be offered Tottenham job. Chelsea to win FA Cup. Baggio to join Newcastle while Ferdinand goes to Aston Villa.

CRICKET

Derek Pringle

With just a single Test win in 1996, it has been a less than exhilarating year for England's Test cricketers, whose latest 0-0 draw against Zimbabwe has merely served to confirm a deep-rooted stagnation, which has been ignored as long as it has been suspected.

There is no doubt then that English cricket is in flux, both on and off the field, the latter due mainly to the formation of the new England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) under the chairmanship of Lord MacLaurin. He is charged with the task of rationalising an ailing and docile domestic system to the betterment of the national side. After their forthcoming tour of New Zealand, England meet Australia, their oldest of foes, for an Ashes summer.

Australia should win the Ashes, though England can be expected to take one of the Tests after the series has been settled. Michael Atherton is likely to be appointed for the first two Tests of the summer following what I predict will be an unconvincing 1-0 series win in New Zealand. If his side lose both those matches, he will surely not see the summer out as England's leader.

Over the six summer Tests, Glenn McGrath, Australia's opening bowler, can be expected to take more Ashes wickets than Shane Warne, who

McGrath can upset Warne



Shane Warne: Hoping to spin Australia to Ashes victory

just might be partly tamed by John Crawley and Nasser Hussain. Expect the latter to be Atherton's successor should England capitulate early on.

In county cricket, Warwickshire, with Allan Donald returned, should contest the head of the County Championship with Surrey and Leicestershire. I expect Durham will win a first-class game, while two from Oval (Middlesex), Ashley Cowan (Essex) and James Kirtley (Sussex) will play for England in the final Test at The Oval.

If that sounds improbable, on the same day as David Gower celebrates his 40th birthday, a branch of Tesco's will open in Calcutta, as Lord MacLaurin strikes up an unlikely alliance with Jagmohan Dalmiya, India's cricketing power broker and self-styled saviour of world cricket.

Yet as other temples fall and MCC at last becomes bisexual, I expect one institution to remain intact, at least for another year, with Graham Gooch spurning the job as chairman of selectors – which I predict will fall to Mike Gatting instead – and playing out his valedictory season with Essex. Expect him to finish again as the country's leading run-scorer.

Prediction: Australia to win Test series 4-1. Chris Lewis to model for Jean-Paul Gaultier in Milan.

ATHLETICS

Mike Rowbottom

Athens the target

The season's main event, the World Championships in Athens (1-10 August), is likely to attract a greater proportion of leading athletes than did the 1995 version.

For the first time, the International Amateur Athletic Federation is making prize-money available in the competition, which will take a share of the \$20m (£12.1m) available for the 1997 IAAF programme.

The first IAAF championship to pay prize-money will be the world indoor event at Paris on 7-9 March.

Britain has no defending champions in that competition, but Jonathan Edwards is one outdoor title-holder who will be seeking to hang on to that distinction in Athens, where he would no doubt relish a re-match with the American who beat him to the Olympic triple-jump gold, Kenny Harrison.

Greece could also be where Kelly Holmes earns some of the greater success at 800 metres and 1500m which injury denied her at the Olympics. Britain's other Atlanta medalists apart from Edwards – Roger Black and the 400m relay team, Steve Backley, Denise Lewis and Steve Smith – all look capable of earning further success.

The efficacy of Britain's newly established forum for its athletes, the British Athletes' Association, will be put to an early test when selections are announced for the 1997 European Cup competition, which will be in Turin from 21-22 June.

The same city will host the world cross-country championships on 23 March, where Britain's Jon Brown, who took the European cross-country title in December, will seek a place in the top six against strong African opposition.

A challenge of a different kind looms in Lévin, France, on 16 February, when Lintford Christie, supposedly retired, is considering a run-out on the indoor track where he broke the 200m record in 1995.

Another less orthodox challenge is planned for the Toronto Skydome, where Donovan Bailey, the Olympic 100m champion, and Michael Johnson, Olympic 200m and 400m champion, will race head-to-head over 300 metres.

Predictions: The rise and rise of Kenya's young middle-distance marvel Daniel Komen; gold for Kelly Holmes; Lintford Christie to run a 100m in under 10sec.



Kelly Holmes: Golden prospects

Champagne cocktails all round or another depressing pile of sackcloth and ashes? British rugby will forget all about the committee room traumas of 1996 if the Lions, managed by Fran Cotton and coached by Ian McGeechan, turn over the Springboks in South Africa this summer. But even if they succeed in a country where they have triumphed only once in 11 visits since 1891, the jubilation is likely to be little more than a momentary phenomenon.

When the Lions disband and the individual nations resume their masochistic battles with the superpowers from south of the equator, this year's story will be much the same as last year's. England will play all three world leaders in the space of a month during the winter – indeed, they face New Zealand twice in three weeks – and at

this stage it is hard to see them winning a single Test. And if they are doomed to failure, where does that leave Scotland, Ireland and Wales?

At least the Lions' tour will put rugby on a pedestal during the summer months – a nice Jack Rowell: No natural heir controlling body made up of representatives from the Rugby Football Union and the leading professional teams. Up until now the two sides would have

been happier slithering around in a mud wrestling pit than sitting at a table, but they are going to have to learn to love each other. Go on, Sir John, give Cliff

Perhers the most intriguing issue surrounds the long-term successor to Jack Rowell as England coach. Not that Jack is likely to jump ship in the foreseeable future, but one of the disturbing aspects of the national set-up is that there is a complete lack of any realistic pretender to his throne. Ian McGeechan, a Scot from tip to toe, may emerge as a rival if the Lions make a decent fist of it. We shall see.

Predictions: The Lions to lose by the odd Test in South Africa; England to pinch the Five Nations; and Leicester to win any two of the three major club trophies.

RACING

Greg Wood

Imperial reign at Cheltenham

You did not need to be Irish to appreciate either the victory of Imperial Call in the Gold Cup at Cheltenham last March, or the jubilation which ensued in the winners' enclosure afterwards. Most exciting still, though, was the possibility that Imperial Call, eight years old today, still has his best seasons ahead of him. After no end of false dawns, the country where jump racing is a national obsession may have found an heir to Aride, a prospect which will warm hearts on both sides of the sea on the run-in to the Festival.

When the Flat season kicks in shortly afterwards, the Godolphin stable which claimed its first trainers' title in 1996 will set out for the first time with a healthy contingent of juveniles. That Godolphin no longer relies simply on Sheikh Mohammed's cheque-book to build up its strength indicates that its growth curve has yet to peak, and once again their next campaign should be the best so far. Which will be good news for Lanfranco Dettori, as he sets out

to recapture from Pat Eddy the jockeys' championship which everyone but turf aficionados seems to assume is still his. Dettori's impact on the national consciousness was a major boost in a difficult year for racing, and will no doubt be consolidated. So too, though, will the influence of the National Lottery on the betting public, with the launch of a midweek draw next month. Britain's bookmakers are mounting a spirited rearguard action against the forces of Camelot, with the recent launch of their own numbers bet just the latest skirmish, but it offers no direct benefit to racing and Levy will seem sure to decline once again this year. It is just another difficult problem for Lord Wakeham, British Horseracing Board chairman and former arch Tory chief whip, in a year which may well bring his political enemies to power.

Predictions: Imperial Call to win the Cheltenham Gold Cup. Space Trucker to win Cheltenham Gold Cup.

RUGBY UNION

Chris Hewett

Lions offer optimism

At least the Lions' tour will put rugby on a pedestal during the summer months – a nice Jack Rowell: No natural heir controlling body made up of representatives from the Rugby Football Union and the leading professional teams. Up until now the two sides would have

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Predictions: The Lions to lose by the odd Test in South Africa; England to pinch the Five Nations; and Leicester to win any two of the three major club trophies.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Dave Hadfield

Make or break for new order

This is the year in which rugby league must sort itself out, both at home and abroad, if it is to have a future worth the name. Domestically, this year the excuses run out: if we are still debating next winter whether Super League and summer rugby are a success then the answer will be that they are not and never will be. It is, therefore, a season that demands positive thinking, a healing of fault lines between traditionalists and innovators, amateurs and professionals, idealists and pragmatists.

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In the short-term, there will be a trickle of players lost: will Viteiga Tuligamai ever be prime a Wigan player again, for instance? Over the longer run, league needs to be strong and unified if some clubs are not to start thinking of moving in the same direction. There are those who already see re-absorption as a historical inevitability. That would be a tragedy, because the reasons that some of us infinitely prefer league remain as valid as ever.

Predictions: St Helens to show that they have the necessary resilience to retain the Stones Super League Championship.

countries. That happy day is as far away as ever, because the battle between Super League and the Australian Rugby League will continue – at the tumbler and the TV remote control rather than in court – through the year.

Of equal significance is the relationship between the two codes of rugby and how that will develop now that union is open to professional and league – or at least parts of it – is nervous.

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Williams should again be the team to beat, and Jacques Villeneuve's experience of the title contest last season ought to arm him with a crucial advantage over his new team-mate, Germany's Heinz-Harald Frentzen.

However, Frentzen's admirers will tell you he was once quicker than his compatriot, Michael Schumacher, and that he Michael Schumacher, he may be too hot for the Canadian.

Frentzen has had a tendency to push his car over the limit, but that should not be necessary in a Williams. The critical factor could be how he copes with the expectations of his team, who demonstrably signed him to beat Schumacher.

Ferrari are optimistic their latest creation will give Schumacher

more muscle this year and, although the champion of 1994 and 1995 is characteristically cautious, a car remotely close to the capability of the Williams should be enough to return the title to its rightful owner.

Prediction: A supercharged contest for the title between Schumacher and Frentzen.

GOLF

Andy Farrell

Woods to come of age

The scary part about Tiger Woods being elected *Sport Illustrated's* Sportsman of the Year is how often he will win it in the future. He may have won an unprecedented third successive US Amateur title, picked up rookie endorsements of \$60m (£36m) and won two of his first seven pro events, but what about when he wins a major championship, several majors, the Grand Slam? The even scarier part is that one of those wins came when he was suffering from a groin strain, the other a heavy cold. As Woods said: "I haven't played my best yet."

Woods' first professional major will be the US Masters in April. He has already played Augusta National twice and his long-hitting game is made for the place. Last year, Jack Nicklaus said Woods would surpass his and Arnold Palmer's tally of 10 Green Jackets. But Woods, 21 last Monday, will not steal the whole show. The US Open, at Congressional in June, will spotlight Nick Faldo's desire to win that elusive title.



Tiger Woods: A major on the cards

TENNIS

Simon O'Hagan

Consolidation for Henman

Last year was the first since 1991 that there had been two first-time winners in Grand Slams – Yevgeny Kafelnikov in the French Open and Richard Krajicek at Wimbledon – and relatively youthful they were too. But to take this as an indication that tennis' world order was changing would be premature.

Perhaps the most notable aspect of the game as we go into the new year is the way the positions of the older guard – in the form of Pete Sampras, Boris Becker and Michael Chang – have become entrenched. At 29, Becker's defiance of the years is the most remarkable. Later this month he defends his Australian Open title on the back of his demolition of the opposition in the Grand Slam Cup at the beginning of December. Sampras, aged 25, followed his victory in the 1996 US Open by beating Becker to the ATP Championship title in a match that produced some of the best tennis seen for years. And Chang, al-



Martina Hingis: Blossoming talent

Pick of the
New

Pick of the Day

The Mill on the Floss
9pm BBC1

This current cycle of costume dramas, started by *Middlemarch* in 1995, develops a nice symmetry as George Eliot is once again called upon to provide the source material – this time, her earlier novel about the spirited daughter of a mill-house owner. This production, written by Hugh Stoddart and directed by Graham Thackston, is bracingly austere and intelligent, starring the unfamiliar but excellent Emily Watson and James Frain.



Pick of the Day

The Tony Ferrino Phenomenon
9.20pm BBC2

Steve Coogan's latest creation – endlessly trailed on chat shows over the past few weeks – finally gets to take off in full flight. Ferrino is a spangly, sex-and-self-obsessed Portuguese crooner – and this showcase boasts some very funny and well-staged musical mirth at the expense of Eurotrash pop and TV. Mick Hucknall, Kim Wilde and Gary Wilmot play themselves and extend the joke.

New Year's Day television and radio

BBC 1

7.00 Children's BBC: Joe 90. 7.25 Playdays. 7.45 Postman Pat. 8.00 Peter Pan and the Pirates. 8.20 Bodger and Badger. 8.35 The Legend of Prince Valiant. 9.00 Incredible Games. 9.25 Sweet Valley High. 9.50 Record Breakers Gold. 10.15 Blue Peter Magic Moments. *
10.45 *Bigfoot and the Hendersons* (William Dear 1987 US). John Lithgow – he of *Third Rock from the Sun* – and his family go camping in the mountains and discover a shaggy beast, who then decides to come home with them (12370401). *
12.30 *Wipeout* (S) (498265). 1.00 News and Weather (71685062). 1.08 Local News and Weather (96778772). 1.10 Neighbours (8065040). 1.30 The World of Peter Rabbit and Friends (R) (481291). *
2.00 *Porridge* (Dick Clement 1979 UK). So-so spin-off from the wonderful TV series finds the regulars all present and correct (77420). *
3.30 *Global Sunrise*. Cameras capture the rising of the sun on the same morning (1 January 1996) from 20 different locations throughout the world, through six continents and every time zone. Julian Petifer is your host (S) (6109333). *
4.50 *Final Score* (S) (194710). *
5.10 News and Weather (7431277). *
5.20 *Regional News* (9647130). *
5.25 *Torn and Torn* (1823517). *
5.45 *Neighbours*. Stone's birthday (S) (852420). *
6.10 *ET: The Extra-Terrestrial* (Steven Spielberg 1982 US). From a time when extra-terrestrials were considered benign, Spielberg's magical blockbuster about a lonely 10-year-old boy (Henry Thomas) who befriends an alien left on earth by a visiting spaceship (S) (65999642). *
8.00 *Ronnie Barker: A Life in Comedy*. The Guv'nor, as David Jason used to – still does, probably – call him, gives his first television interview since he retired eight years ago. Among the clips from *The Two Ronnies*, *Porridge* and *Yes, Minister* are from Jason's, Nicholas Lyndhurst, Michael Palin and Ronnie Corbett (S) (162389). *
8.40 *News*, *Regional News and Weather* (225771). *
9.00 *The Mill on the Floss*. See *Pick of the Day*, above (S) (1853820). *
11.05 *Match of the Day*. Highlights of Manchester United's New Year's Day clash with Aston Villa at Old Trafford – plus all the goals from today's Premiership matches. Desmond Lynam and Trevor Brooking are on studio duty (S) (978420). *
12.10 *Big Jake* (George Sherman 1971 US). Surprisingly violent John Wayne western, an uneasy mixture of traditional Wayne-style stunts and heroics and modish *Butch Cassidy*-style shenanigans. The "Duke" plays an ageing Texan rancher who rides to the rescue when his ex-wife asks him to help find their kidnapped grandson. Richard Boone, Maureen O'Hara, Chris Mitchum and Patrick Wayne co-star (743591).
1.55 *Weather* (2815840). 7.00am.

BBC 2

7.30 *Blockade* (William Dieterle 1938 US). Henry Fonda and Madeleine Carroll fall in love against a backdrop of the Spanish Civil War – a cause célèbre for liberals in Hollywood, as elsewhere (5982604). 8.50 *Fonda on Fonda*. Jane Fonda has a tribute to father, Henry (R) (209333). *
9.40 *My Darling Clementine* (John Ford 1946 US). Fonda's Wyatt Earp and Victor Mature's Doc Holiday head for the D&T Corral in this classic piece of Fordian mythologising (22538401). *
11.15 *New Year's Day Concert from Vienna*. The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and a concert of Strauss polkas, waltzes and marches. A simultaneous broadcast with Radio 3 (S) (6087458). *
12.30 *The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures*. Professor Conway Morris delivers his final lecture tracing the process of evolution (S) (33994). *
1.30 *Olympic Gymnastics*. Highlights from the gymnastic events at this summer's Olympic Games in Atlanta, with Barry Davies (34523). *
2.30 *New York City Ballet Salutes George Balanchine*. From 1993, a Vivian Durante and the New York City Ballet mark the 10th anniversary of the choreographer's death (S) (492913). *
3.55 *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* (Mel Stuart 1971 US). Gene Wilder stars as the eccentric confectionery king who takes a group of youngsters and their guardians on a tour of his factory in this version of Roald Dahl's much-loved children's story (636178). *
5.30 *Sid Sunday Special* (S) (983536). *
6.10 *In the Eye of the Wind*. David Attenborough narrates the story of migrating birds (S) (626739). *
7.00 *Waiting for God*. Christy's 1993's seasonal episode of the oldie sitcom (R) (S) (2333). *
7.30 *University Challenge International Special*. British champions Imperial College London taking on their American counterparts, the University of Michigan, for the title of International Champions (S) (3). *
8.00 *The Travel Show Caribbean Special*. With Amanda Redman in Puerto Rico, the *Independent's* Simon Calder on the Island of Dominica, and comedian Arthur Smith in Antigua (S) (467711). *
8.40 *News*, *Regional News and Weather* (225771). *
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10.10 *Short Cuts* (Robert Altman 1993 US). The Altman revival, started by *The Player*, continued with his filming of some of Raymond Carver short stories – turning them into an engrossing portmanteau movie looking at contrasting lifestyles of various Californian types. More Altman than Carver, really, but worth while. The cast includes Andie MacDowell, Tim Robbins, Jennifer Jason Leigh and Jack Lemmon (3816855).
1.15 *Weather* (5031227). 7.00am.

ITV/London

6.00 *GMTV* (1184081). 9.25 *Santa Bungo* (S) (8225994). 9.50 *Cartoon Time* (2683623). 10.10 *A Man for All Seasons* (Fred Zinnemann 1965 UK). Robert Bolt's one-sided ding-dong between Henry VIII (Robert Shaw) and Sir Thomas More (Paul Scofield) brought respectively to the screen Wendy Hiller, Susannah York, John Hurt and Orson Welles support (50731994). *
12.30 *News* (25326449). 12.45 *Celebrity Squares* (S) (396046). *
1.15 *Silverado* (Lawrence Kasdan 1985 US). Kasdan's self-conscious and rather over-rated western about a mismatched quartet (Kevin Kline, Kevin Costner, Danny Glover and Scott Glenn) teaming up to save a run-down town from outlaws. Jeff Goldblum, Rosanna Arquette and John Cleese also star (49001710). *
3.40 *Straight Talk* (Barney Kellman 1992 US). Country girl Dolly Parton trucks up in Chicago, is mistaken for a radio shrink, but works them anyway with her down-home advice. James Woods and Griffin Dunne are also implicated (350246). *
5.20 *News*, *Weather* (6234771). *
5.35 *Goldberg* (Dan Goldberg 1988 US). Rebecca De Mornay deserves and usually receives better parts than this – as one of a pair of female FBI recruits dealing with male chauvinism (S) (1634791). *
7.00 *Emmerdale*. Sophie reluctantly faces up to the consequences of last night's (S) (7159). *
7.30 *Coronation Street*. Mike and Alma's big dinner party goes awry (811). *
8.00 *Des O'Connor Tonight*. The seasoned schmoeze's guests are Barbara Streisand, Damage, Jimmie and Ken Dodd (S) (6802). *
9.00 *Die Hard John McTiernan 1988 US*. The original and still the best of these wham-bang-smash wallop marathons starring Bruce Willis as the LA cop who keeps mislaying his wife (Bonnie Bedelia). Alan Rickman steals the picture, though, as super-villain Hans Gruber (S) (66331555). *
11.25 *News*, *Weather* (185178). *
11.40 *Alien Lifepod* (Ron Silver 1993 US). Sub-Alien sci-fi drama about the survivors of a spaceship, disaster coming to terms with being trapped in a drifting escape pod and the fact that the saboteur behind their mishap is still at large (S) (907975). *
1.20 *Are You Being Served?* (Bob Keeler 1977 UK). The staff of Grace Bros go on a package tour to the costas in this big screen spin-off (904918). *
3.05 *Till Death Us Do Part* (Norman Cohn 1968 UK). Another spin-off – this one more ambitious than most – a history, no less, of the Garnett family from the Blitz to the 1966 World Cup. Social history courtesy of Johnny Speight, and starring Warren Mitchell, Dandy Nichols, Una Stubbs and Anthony Booth (S) (45111). *
4.50 *Football Extra* (R) (4135869).
5.30 *The Malling of Star Trek*. First Contact (5898383). 7.00am.

Channel 4

6.26 *Early Morning*, *Sesame Street* (6920505). *
7.20 *The Babysitters Club* (R) (8461449). *
7.50 *Stunt Dapse* (2864449). *
8.15 *Line Shop* (R) (8846420). *
8.35 *Where on Earth is Carmen San Diego?* (R) (S) (3903975). *
9.00 *The Big Breakfast* (9908). *
10.00 *Hangin' with Mr Cooper* (R) (S) (87449). *
10.30 *The Crystal Maze* (R) (S) (24246). *
11.30 *Back to the Future* (R) (S) (6573541). *
11.55 *The Pink Panther* (R) (S) (7828438). *
12.20 *Rock's Modern Life* (R) (S) (6564265). *
12.45 *Soul Searching*. A Jewish woman, pregnant by a married man, wants to have the baby brought up within her faith (S) (736028). *
1.15 *Racing from Cheltenham*. The 1.35, 2.10, 2.45 and 3.20 races (4909064). *
3.45 *The Beast Bites Back* (R) (S) (2559772). *
4.00 *Countdown* (S) (94). *
5.00 *News and Weather* (9650604). *
5.05 *I'm All Right Jack* (John Boulting 1959 UK). Contemporary British labour relations as satirised in this classic Boulting Brothers comedy. Ian Carmichael is in the blue corner – shop-steward Peter Sellers is in the red one (22878604). *
7.50 *All Steamed Up*. Britain's narrow gauge steam railways explored (S) (2284). *
8.00 *Brookside*. Jimmy says his goodbyes, but is he really leaving for good this time? (S) (3449). *
8.30 *A Woman of Independent Means*. 2/3. Continuing the mini-series starring Sally Field as the southern belle. Concludes tomorrow (S) (3865817). *
10.15 *Klinft*. In the footsteps of last Christmas' *Pelles*, British actors and surreal voice-overs to a Dutch television medical soap opera (S) (647807). *
10.25 *Caws*. Eddie Izzard's long-awaited debut sitcom, about a family of cattle (Pam Ferris and others in cow masks), and it's a stinker. It just doesn't work – although, on the plus side, at least it's original and has moments when sheer incredulity forces out the odd laugh. Not even cult material (S) (779807). *
11.25 *Brubaker* (Stuart Rosenberg 1980 US). Impressive reforming prison drama, based on events in Arkansas in the late 1960s, where prisoners were hired out by gun-carrying convicts – guards to farms and businesses in the region. Robert Redford is the newly appointed liberal-minded governor (2798468). *
1.50 *Being There* (Hal Ashby 1979 US). The Peter Sellers season continues with this influential parable about how America is taken in by the sort of horney ignorance it mistakes for deep wisdom. Sellers is the gardener who gets to the White House. Shirley MacLaine supports (61403685). *
4.15 *Hoffman* (Alvin Rakoff 1970 UK). Off-the-wall comedy in which middle-aged torer Peter Sellers falls in love with his typist (Sheila Cusack) and attempts to blackmail her into spending a week with him (408840). 7.00am.

ITV/Regions

ANGLIA As London except: 12.45pm *Cross Wits* (936046). 5.34 *Anglia Air Watch* (590604). 11.39 *Anglia Weather* (850265). 1.20am *News*, *Bite the Bullet* (3327759). 3.45am *Not Far Away* (6465666). 4.40-5.55am *Film: A Tale of Two Cities* (3046024). *
CHANNEL 3 NORTH EAST/YORKSHIRE As London except: 12.44pm *Yorks*. Local Weather (36148197). 12.45 *Emmerdale* (936046). 11.39 *Yorks: Local Weather* (650265). 1.20am *Entertainment UK* (6485711). 2.25am *Channel 3 North East*: Film: *Hollywood Heroes and Heroines* (223666). 2.25am *Film: Hollywood Heroes and Heroines* (972869). 4.10-5.55am *Channel 3 North East*: Film: *A Tale of Two Cities* (418227). *
CENTRAL As London except: 11.39pm *Local Weather* (850265). 5.30-5.55am *The Making of Star Trek*. Beyond First Contact (589383). *
HTV As London except: 12.44pm *HTV Weather* (65148197). 12.45 *The Making of James and the Giant Peach* (936046). 5.34am *HTV Weather* (650265). 11.39 *HTV Weather* (850265). 3.45am *Not Far Away* (6465666). 4.40-5.55am *Film: A Tale of Two Cities* (3046024). *
WEST COUNTRY As London except: 12.45pm *Emmerdale* (936046). 1.20am *Film: Bite the Bullet* (3327759). 3.45am *Not Far Away* (6465666). 4.40-5.55am *Film: A Tale of Two Cities* (3046024). *
SC 6.20am *Sesame Street* (6920505). 7.20 *The Babysitters Club* (R) (8461449). 8.15 *Little Shop*, (R) (8646420). 8.35 *Where on Earth is Carmen San Diego?* (R) (9303975). 10.00 *Film: Tom Thumb* (17431979). 11.45 *The Adventures of Mole* (164371). 12.45pm *Slot Meilini* (736028). 4.30 *Famous Fred* (94). 5.00 *5 Pump* (7265). 5.30 *Countdown* (46). 6.00 *News* (797219). 6.05 *Home and Leisure* (34349). 6.35 *Slot Meilini* (736028). 7.30 *Slot Meilini* (736028). 8.30 *News* (797219). 9.00 *Police* (771620). 7.30 *Police* (7976420). 11.25 *MDM*, *Mr Eel* (241517). 8.00 *Stewart Whitey McEwan Jones* (730594). 8.45 *News* (2431517). 9.00 *Pavarotti Returns to Langollen* (2555). 10.30 *Brookside* (495739). 11.05 *Klinft* (196284). 11.20 *Cows* (909517). 12.15 *Caroline in the City* (38383). 12.45-12.45am *Homicide: Life on the Street* (271208).

Radio

Radio 1
6.00am *Charlie Jordan* 10.00 *Radio 1*
6.00am *Postman Pat* 8.05am *Steve Lamarr's Hits* for 9.70 *Stayin' Out for the Summer* 11.00 in *Concert: Orbital* 12.00 *Mary Anne Hobbs* 4.00-5.00am *Charlie Jordan*
6.00am *Big Breakfast* 8.05am *Local News* 10.00 *Weather* 11.00 *Music* 12.00 *Local News* 1.00 *Weather* 2.00 *Local News* 3.00 *Weather*
Radio 2
6.00am *Nick Barracough* 8.05am *Sarah Kennedy* 10.00 *Alex Lester* 1.00 *Christmas Comedy Classics* 1.30 *The Beatles* at the BBC 2.30 *Ed Stewart* 5.05 *John Dunn* 7.00 *Evita* 8.00 *Brake 8.00 Love on the Moon* 9.30 *Caro Currie* 10.00 *Pavarotti and the Orchestra* 11.00 *Bob Harris* 1.00 *Adrian Firth* 3.00-4.00 *Steve Madden*
Radio 3
6.00am *Charlie Jordan* 8.05am *Sarah Kennedy* 10.00 *Local News* 11.00 *Weather* 12.00 *Music* 1.00 *Local News* 2.00 *Local News* 3.00 *Local News* 4.00 *Local News* 5.00 *Local News* 6.00 *Local News* 7.00 *Local News* 8.00 *Local News* 9.00 *Local News* 10.00 *Local News* 11.00 *Local News* 12.00 *Local News* 1.00 *Local News* 2.00 *Local News* 3.00 *Local News* 4.00 *Local News* 5.00 *Local News* 6.00 *Local News* 7.00 *Local News* 8.00 *Local News* 9.00 *Local News* 10.00 *Local News* 11.00 *Local News* 12.00 *Local News* 1.00 *Local News* 2.00 *Local News* 3.00 *Local News* 4.00 *Local News* 5.00 *Local News* 6.00 *Local News* 7.00 *Local News* 8.00 *Local News* 9.00 *Local News* 10.00 *Local News* 11.00 *Local News* 12.00 *Local News* 1.00 *Local News* 2.00 *Local News* 3.00 *Local News* 4.00 *Local News* 5.00 *Local News* 6.00 *Local News* 7.00 *Local News* 8.00 *Local News* 9.00 *Local News* 10.00 *Local News* 11.00 *Local News* 12.00 *Local News* 1.00 *Local News* 2.00 *Local News*

Mercury moves in opposite directions for England's premier sportsmen



The England striker Alan Shearer trains in Durham yesterday, while the England strike bowler Darren Gough copes with the heat in Harare

Photographs: Bonney's, Newcastle/Chris Turvey, Empics

Winter bites into new year action

Nearly a quarter of a million football supporters in England will have to find something else to do today after the cold and snow bit deep into the New Year's Day programme. Two Premiership games have already been postponed - Leicester's match against Tottenham and Derby's fixture with Sheffield Wednesday. The Nationwide League programme has been severely disrupted, as has the Scottish League. Motherwell's match against Kilmarnock became the first Premier Division casualty north of the border and in the Second Division only Livingston's match with Berwick remains.

Derby's game was called off on police advice, with manager Jim Smith saying: "There is no problem with the pitch but the approach roads to the ground are treacherous. It was in the interest of the fans to call the game off."

The Nationwide League top-of-the-table game between Sheffield United and Wolves was one of a number of matches in the First Division that has fallen victim. West Brom fans, however, are being given the chance to watch the home game against Tranmere Rovers for free if they help to clear a snow-covered Hawthorn. Supporters are being asked to bring along shovels, snowboards and brushes from 9am as the pitch covers and most of the surrounds are under a blanket of snow.

On the day that Coventry City announced that they are planning to install a new £300,000 underfloor heating system this summer, the flood of postponements is bound to fuel the debate about a winter break. John Barnwell, chief executive of the League Managers Association, said: "People say it is time to grasp the nettle and consider a winter break. But I don't think the situation is as clear cut as it was years ago."

Defenders wishing to be attackers is a concept not unknown at Newcastle even if the reverse is not always the case, although it is hard to nit-pick after their 7-1 rout of Spurs on Saturday. Today they meet Leeds, who have not won in five matches and who are slipping towards the relegation zone again.

Everton are also sliding although, like Middlesbrough, with their injuries it is hardly surprising. Half their team are out today against reviving Blackburn and David Unsworth is missing through suspension. "What looked a bright picture two weeks ago with everyone fit has suddenly got a bit headachy defensively," Joe Royle, their manager, said. "You can't have enough men these days."

It could have been Miss Collins talking.

Fixtures, page 16

Consistency the key for Liverpool

Football

GUY HODGSON

It may have come as a shock yesterday that the screen queen Joan Collins was receiving an OBE, rather than handing them out, but that was nothing to what Chelsea experienced at Anfield this season. Unbeaten after six Premiership matches a spanking new era looked likely until the rude reality intruded on Ruud Gullit's honeymoon as a player-manager.

Spanking was the word as they lost 5-1 that day. As a result the team has been defined in the classic Chelsea mould - good but not good enough - but that could change if they beat Liverpool today and set optimism raging round west London again.

A defeat against the leaders, on top of squandering a 2-0 lead against Sheffield Wednesday on Saturday, and Chelsea's inclination would surely be to play for a Uefa Cup place and concentrate on the FA Cup. "We need three points," Craig Burley, their midfield player, said.

"The Sheffield Wednesday result was a setback because we had played so well early on. We paid the penalty for not killing the game off."

Liverpool could give lessons in doing that but have established a five-point advantage despite hitting their finest form only fleetingly. "We can be frustrating at times," Roy Evans, their manager, conceded, "but if we concentrate on what we are good at, the results

usually come. The secret is to stay patient." Liverpool, who expect Robbie Fowler, Mark Wright and Jason McAteer to shake off injuries, are certain of going into the new year ahead which, in their case, normally means they stay there. Since 31 December 1976, they have been top team nine times at the turn of the year and have converted that into a championship on seven occasions.

On the minus side, Manchester United are the last side to convert second place at Highbury into first come May - in 1992 and 1993 - and their position this morning is not surprising their

manager, Alex Ferguson, has assumed the mood of a man who believes the best is imminent. Three straight wins and 10 goals without reply have moved United into second, a position they will reinforce if they defeat sixth-placed Aston Villa tonight.

Roy Keane, for one, believes the tide has turned. "At the start of the season we had a few injuries and the players weren't playing to their capabilities, but it's starting to come together now. All you need is three or four good results and it helps the confidence."

Ferguson will probably resist the urge to recall Andy Cole.

preferring to ease him back into the team with 20-minute bursts, and with Phil Neville out with glandular fever and Gary Pallister plagued with a recurrent back injury, his only dilemma will be whether to include Nicky Butt in the starting line-up.

"Villa are a handful," Ferguson said. "They have recovered from a sticky start and are in good form at the moment. But we've also come through our little hiccup and our players are in the frame of mind where they don't mind who their opponents are."

Neither do Middlesbrough. They seem capable of losing to

anyone. They accrued just 28 points from their 35 League games in 1996 and in some of those matches they were able to call on something like their first team. It is not a luxury they will have against Arsenal today as seven players are definitely out and three more are doubtful.

So dire is the situation that their manager, Bryan Robson, may make an unwanted playing swan-song 10 days before his 40th birthday.

To make things even worse for Boro, Ian Wright, the Premiership's leading scorer with 22 goals, will be anxious to leave a reminder before sloping

off on a three-match suspension. A hat-trick would do nicely.

Boro would prefer the match to be postponed although after last week's fiasco at Blackburn they are hardly likely to say so. But two Premierships are definitely off today: Derby County against Sheffield Wednesday and Tottenham's match at Leicester. There was also an inspection at Highfield Road yesterday but Coventry are hopeful their game against Sunderland will go ahead.

After four successive victories, they can scarcely wait to get on to any pitch no matter what the condition. Any position for

that matter, because Coventry's run has coincided with Dion Dublin's move from striker to centre back and yesterday he rejected suggestions he was unhappy with the change.

"I would rather play up front because I am a centre forward," he said, "but with the position we've been in it's a case of all hands to the pump. If that means going back into defence, then I'm willing to play there for the good of the team."

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Fixtures, page 16

Beasant blunder makes Taylor a Saint

ALAN NIXON

Dave Beasant may have made his last mistake for Southampton after Graeme Souness yesterday spent £600,000 on Barnett's German-born goal keeper, Maik Taylor.

Beasant made a hash of a clearance to gift John Barnes a goal and the points against Liverpool on Sunday, prompting the Southampton manager to lift Taylor, a 6ft 5in former soldier, from the Third Division.

The keeper has been registered in time to face Wimbledon today.

Frank Clark wants his old Nottingham Forest keeper, Tommy Wright, to join him at Manchester City. The new

Maine Road manager is trying to intercept the Northern Ireland international's move from Forest to Reading where he has been on loan. Wright is available at around £250,000.

Arsene Wenger is ready to rejoin the bidding for Paul Ince if Internazionale put the England midfielder up for sale.

"We would think it over if

Paul Ince became available," the Arsenal manager said. "Interest will decide the future of Ince, but, for his quality, yes we would be interested, just like many other clubs. There have been no bids or inquiries yet but I am looking at many situations and I don't worry about the nationality of a player, just his ability and character and whether he would fit into our team."

Wenger insists he is not interested in signing the 32-year-old Jürgen Klinsmann, the former Tottenham striker, who is now unsettled at Bayern Munich. "I ideally always want to buy cheap, good and young," Wenger said.

Gary Francis is ready to fend off any Premiership rivals harbouring hopes of snatching leading players from Tottenham.

Teddy Sheringham is being linked with Chelsea and centre-back Sol Campbell is believed to be interesting leaders Liverpool. Speculation has been fuelled by the apparent reluctance of both players to agree new long-term deals.

Liverpool, who recently sold central defender John Scales to Spurs, could offer Jamie Red-

knapp in an exchange deal for Campbell and Francis has never denied his admiration for the talented midfielder.

"Liverpool wouldn't want to hear talking about my players and I'm sure they wouldn't be happy about me talking about theirs, so I will pass on that," Francis said. "But Sol is not going anywhere and I've said many times that the story about Teddy telling me he wants to leave is nonsense. But again people go away and write other things."

Wimbledon's Norwegian midfielder Øyvind Leonhardsen has turned down the offer of a new four-year contract. "I don't want to stay at Wimbledon any longer than one more season," the 26-year-old Leonhardsen, who is valued at £6m by the club, said.

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The Leicester midfielder Neil Lennon has been charged with misconduct by the Football Association for allegedly making gestures to fans. Lennon reported to the police by Newcastle supporters for the gestures he was claimed to have made during Leicester's 2-0 win in October.

Brighton have named supporters spokesman, Paul Salmon, from all home games for 20 months after the chief executive, David Bellotti, blamed him for leading protests and threats at the Goldstone Ground. Samra, a prominent member of the Brighton Independent Supporters Association, is to seek legal advice.

It could have been Miss Collins talking.

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